























Painted by Delaune

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Mr. Bannister





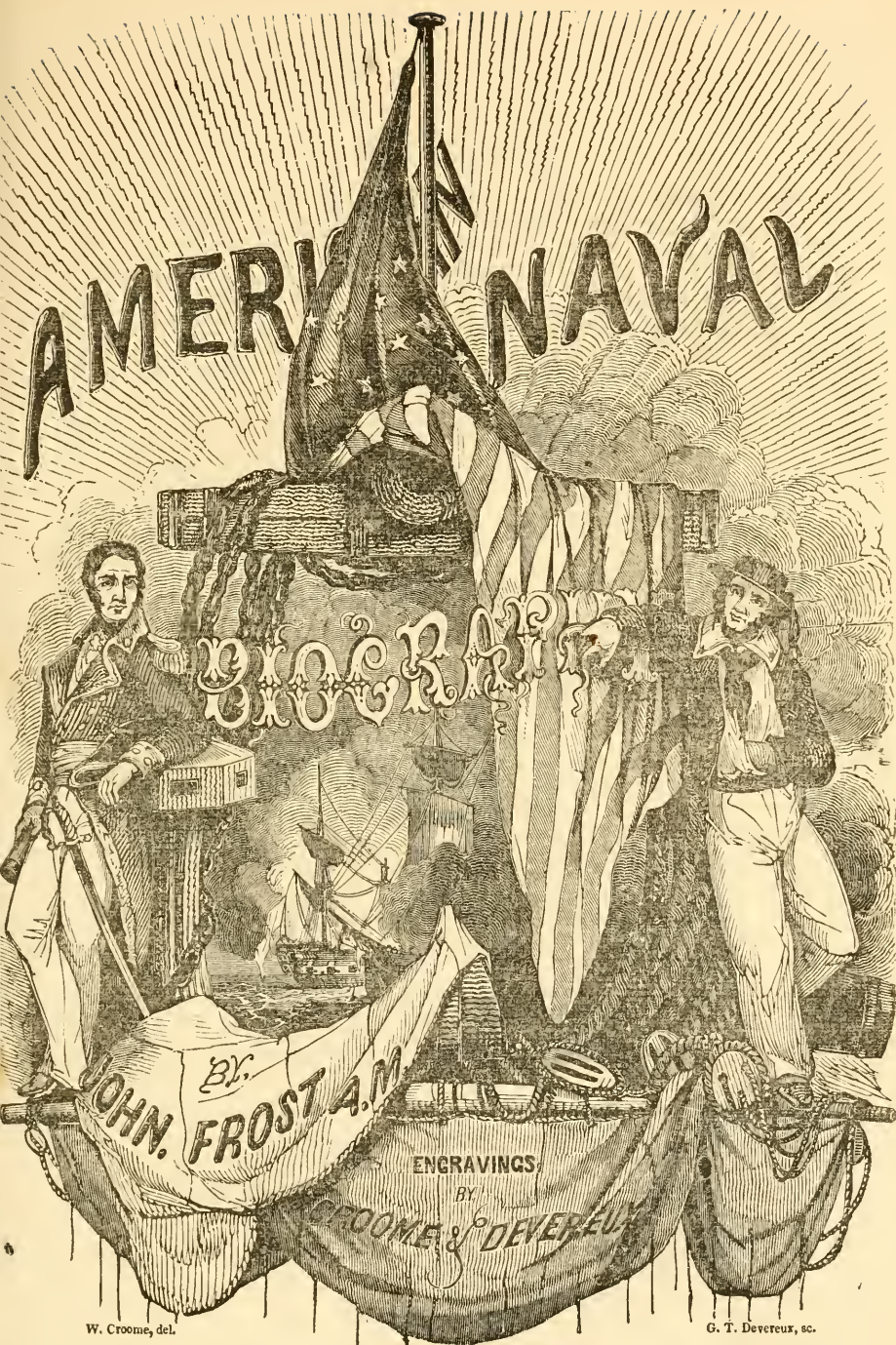
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1844.









W. Croome, del.

G. T. Devereux, sc.

PHILADELPHIA :  
PUBLISHED BY E. H. BUTLER.  
1844.







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AMERICAN  
NAVAL BIOGRAPHY,  
COMPRISING  
LIVES OF THE COMMODORES,  
AND  
OTHER COMMANDERS  
DISTINGUISHED IN  
THE HISTORY OF THE AMERICAN NAVY.

COMPILED FROM THE BEST AUTHORITIES,  
BY JOHN FROST, LL. D.  
PROFESSOR OF BELLES LETTRES IN THE HIGH SCHOOL OF PHILADELPHIA.  
EMBELLISHED WITH  
PORTRAITS, VIEWS OF REMARKABLE ENGAGEMENTS,  
AND  
OTHER ILLUSTRATIVE ENGRAVINGS,  
FROM  
ORIGINAL DRAWINGS,  
BY W. CROOME, JAMES HAMILTON, AND OTHERS.

PHILADELPHIA:  
PUBLISHED BY E. H. BUTLER.

STEREOTYPED BY C. W. MURRAY & CO.

.....  
1844.

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## PREFACE.

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WHILE the Naval Biography of England and the other great maritime powers has been written by the ablest authors, and published with every aid of embellishment and typographical elegance, that of the United States has hitherto been permitted to remain unwritten; or has only presented itself to public notice in the fugitive form of magazine or newspaper articles. It is not to be denied, however, that some of the lives which have appeared in this form were furnished by the ablest writers in the country, and derive their authority from original documents, letters, and personal narratives. From the materials for an AMERICAN NAVAL BIOGRAPHY thus furnished, in addition to other original materials politely furnished by surviving naval officers, or the families of those who are deceased, the following work is composed. Were the compiler at liberty to give the name of each writer to whom he is indebted for any portion of this work, the list would command attention and respect by the high literary reputation of the contributors. As it is, the work will speak for itself; and the reader will have no difficulty in perceiving that each biographical sketch has been exe-



cuted by one who is conversant with naval affairs and anxious to do justice to the subject.

The compiler embraces the present opportunity of expressing his gratitude to the gentlemen, connected with the naval service, who have kindly aided the work by furnishing documents and other means of information necessary to its completion. His thanks are also due to Mr. Asa Spencer, the inventor of the machine for medal ruling, for his admirable facsimiles of several of the gold medals, conferred on distinguished commanders by congress. All the engravings of medals in the work, except that of the Preble medal,\* were engraved by Mr. Spencer himself. Nearly all the views of naval actions were designed by Mr. James Hamilton, the marine and landscape painter, a young artist whose talents are already known and appreciated by the public.

Should the present work meet with encouragement, it is the compiler's intention to furnish another series of lives of naval commanders, at some future period.

*Philadelphia, October 17, 1843.*

\* This medal was ruled by Mr. Sexton, of the United States Mint, Philadelphia.



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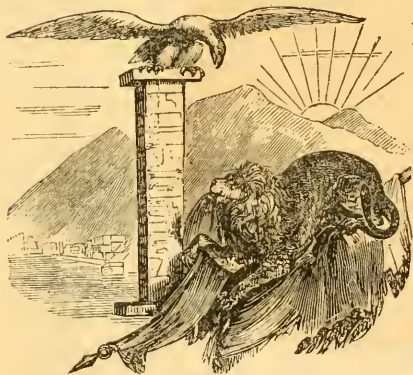








## JOHN PAUL JONES.



N commemorating the lives and services of the naval commanders distinguished in the history of our country, it is but just to place Paul Jones among the first. He was the first to hoist

the American flag in a regular American man of war. He gained the most brilliant victory won upon the ocean during the war of independence; and throughout the whole of his splendid career he exhibited a



degree of courage and ability which has been surpassed by none of those who have succeeded him in the brilliant line of our naval heroes.

JOHN PAUL JONES, was the son of Mr. John Paul, a respectable gardener. He was born at Arbigland, in the parish of Kirkbean, and stewartry of Kirkcudbright, in the month of July, 1747, and received the rudiments of his education at the parochial school. The contiguity of his residence to the shore of the Solway Firth, inspired him with an early predilection for a sea-faring life; and while yet a mere child, he hoisted his flag on board his mimic ship, and issued audible mandates to his imaginary officers and crew, with all the consequence of a legitimate commander. Nor was he content with this. As his skill in manœuvring improved, he ventured to criticise the nautical knowledge of practical sailors; and in the eager and confident tone with which, from the eminence on which he took his station, he thundered forth his orders to the vessels which were entering the port at Carsethorn, might be remarked the ardent and enterprising mind of one who felt that he was born to future command.

At the time of which we speak, the town of Dumfries carried on a very considerable trade in tobacco with America; and as the Nith was not navigable to foreign vessels, the cargoes were unshipped at Carsethorn, near the mouth of that river. There, from his earliest years, Paul had opportunities of conversing with mariners from the discontented colonies; and it is probable that he thus first imbibed that enthusiastic attachment to the United States, and those revolutionary principles, which exerted so decided an in-



fluence on his conduct when he grew up to maturity, and eventually led him to renounce his allegiance, and raise his hand against the country which gave him birth.

His partiality for a sailor's life, was so determined, that his friends resolved to indulge it; and accordingly at the age of twelve, he was sent across the Firth to Whitehaven, where he was bound apprentice to Mr. Younger, a respectable merchant in the American trade. His first voyage was made on board the *Friendship*, Capt. Benson. His course was steered for the Rappahannoc, and before he had completed his thirteenth year, he had landed on the shore of that country which he was destined to adopt as his own. His home, while the ship was in port, was the house of an elder brother, who, having married a native of Virginia, had previously settled there. Here his early prepossessions in favour of America were confirmed, and from that period, as he afterwards expressed himself to Baron Van der Capellan, that became "the country of his fond election."

In the meantime, his intelligence and good conduct acquired him the esteem and confidence of his employer, who promised to give him a substantial proof of his favour, by promoting him to the command of a vessel; and he would have kept his word, had not the embarrassed state of his affairs deprived him of the power to do it.

Our adventurer, being at length freed from the trammels of apprenticeship, made several voyages to the coast of Africa; but he soon became disgusted with a traffic which had too long been the disgrace of civilized nations, and confined his services to the



command of vessels engaged in a more reputable and legitimate commerce.

In the year 1773, he went to Virginia to arrange the affairs of his brother, who had died there without leaving any family; and about this time, in addition to his original surname, he assumed the *patronymic* of Jones, his father's Christian name having been John. This custom, which is of classical authority, has long been prevalent in Wales, and in various other countries, although it is not usual in that part of the island in which he was born.

This visit revived and rivetted the attachment which young Paul Jones had conceived for America; and in spite of the native ardor and restless activity of his mind, he resolved to withdraw from the vicissitudes of a sea-faring life, to fix his residence in that country, and to devote the remainder of his days to retirement and study. He was little aware of the turbulent scenes in which he was destined soon to perform a part, nor of the conspicuous figure he was to make in them.

The discontents of the colonists had by this time occasioned much commotion, and their murmurs became daily deeper and more frequent, till at last they fairly broke off all connection with the parent country. Towards the conclusion of the year 1775, it was determined by Congress to fit out a naval force to assist in the defence of American independence, and an anxious search was made for friends to the cause who should be at once able and willing to act as officers on board their vessels. It now appeared that Paul Jones had, in his romantic schemes of tranquil enjoyment, falsely estimated the natural bent of his genius.



With deep interest he had watched the progress of those political events which were to decide the fate of his adopted country; and when an open resistance was made to the dominion of Britain, he could no longer remain an inactive spectator. Having only just completed his twenty-eighth year, he was full of bodily vigour and of mental energy, and he conceived that his nautical skill would qualify him to be a distinguished asserter of the rights of the colonists. He was immediately appointed first lieutenant of the *Alfred*, one of the only two ships belonging to Congress, and on board that vessel, before Philadelphia, he hoisted the flag of independent America with his own hands, *the first time it was ever displayed* in a national ship. In the course of a very active and successful campaign, having found means to gain the confidence of the Marine Committee by his zeal and intrepidity, he had not served many months before the President sent him a captain's commission.

In November, 1777, he sailed for France, in the *Ranger*, a new sloop-of-war of eighteen guns, with despatches of the victory of Saratoga. It was intended that, "as a reward for the important services" which he had already rendered to America, he should be appointed to the command of the *Indian*, a fine frigate, just built for Congress at Amsterdam, and that the *Ranger* should act under his orders; but the American commissioners at Paris found it their best policy to assign this vessel over to the King of France, and Captain Paul Jones continued with the *Ranger*. Having convoyed some merchant ships to Quiberon Bay, he there received from the French commander the first salute that was ever given to the flag of Congress.



Eager to retaliate upon Britain for some predatory exploits of her sailors on the American coast, and exasperated by the resolution which the English government had taken, to treat all the supporters of independence as traitors and rebels, Captain Paul Jones soon after this entered the Irish Channel, and approached his native shores, not as a friend, but as a determined enemy. On the night of the 22d April, 1778, he came to anchor in the Solway Firth, almost within sight of the trees which sheltered the house in which he first drew the breath of life. Early next morning, he rowed for the English coast, at the head of thirty-one volunteers, in two boats, with the intention of destroying the shipping (about two hundred sail,) which lay in the harbor of Whitehaven. In this daring attempt he would probably have succeeded without difficulty, had not the strength of the opposing tide retarded his progress so much, that day began to dawn before he could gain the shore. He despatched the smaller of the two boats to the north of the port to set fire to the vessels, whilst he led the remainder of the party in person to the more hazardous duty of securing the fort, which was situated on a hill to the south. It was a cold morning; and the sentinels, little aware that an enemy was so near, had retired into the guard-room for warmth, affording Jones an opportunity to take them by surprise, of which he did not fail to avail himself. Climbing over the shoulders of the tallest of his men, he crept silently through one of the embrasures, and was instantly followed by the rest. Their first care was to make fast the door of the guard-room, and their next to spike the cannon, thirty-six in number. Having



effected this without bloodshed, they proceeded to join the detachment which had been sent to the north; and finding that a false alarm had deterred them from executing their orders, Jones instantly proceeded to set fire to the vessels within his reach. By this time, however, the inhabitants were roused, and the invaders were obliged to retreat, leaving three ships in flames, of which one alone was destroyed.

On the same day with this adventure, another memorable occurrence took place, which contributed, for a time, to add greatly to the odium which the first had brought on his name in Britain, but which, in the end, enabled him to prove that he was possessed of the most disinterested and heroic qualities. In cruising off the coast of Galloway, it occurred to him, that, if he could get into his power a man of high rank and influence in the state, he should be able, by retaining him as a hostage, to ensure to the American prisoners of war more lenient treatment than was threatened by the British government. Knowing that the Earl of Selkirk possessed a seat in St. Mary's Isle, a beautiful peninsula at the mouth of the Dee, and being ill-informed with regard to the political connections of that nobleman, he destined him for the subject of his experiment. With that view, he landed on the Isle, about noon, with two officers and a few men; but before they had proceeded far, he learnt that his lordship was from home, and that there were none but ladies at the house. Finding his object frustrated, he now wished to return; but his crew were not so easily satisfied. Their object was plunder; and as they consisted of men in a very imperfect state of discipline, and with



whom it would have been dangerous to contend, he allowed them to proceed. He exacted from them, however, a promise that they should be guilty of no violence; that the men should not enter the house, and that the officers, after having made their demands, should accept of what might be put into their hands without scrutiny. These conditions were punctually obeyed. The greater part of the Selkirk plate was carried off in triumph by the crew, and Paul Jones was, for a time, stigmatized as a freebooter: but he nobly vindicated his character, by taking the earliest opportunity of purchasing the whole of it, out of his own private funds, and remitting it safe to its original owner, without accepting the smallest remuneration. National prejudice has misrepresented this transaction; and in order to heighten the popular indignation against our hero, it has been common to state, that this attempt on the person, and as it was supposed the property, of Lord Selkirk, was aggravated by ingratitude, his father having eaten of that nobleman's bread. Nothing can be more false. Neither Mr. Paul, nor any of his kindred, ever was in the Earl's employ, or had ever the most distant connection with his lordship or his family; and in a correspondence which took place between our hero and Lady Selkirk, relative to the restitution of the plate, a most honourable testimony was gratefully paid by the latter to the Captain's character.

The day succeeding the two events just mentioned, Paul Jones encountered the Drake, a King's ship of twenty guns, in Carrick Fergus bay, and took her after a very brave resistance, in the course of which the English captain and his first lieutenant were





Jones restores Lord Selkirk's plate.







mortally wounded. With this and another large prize, Captain Jones returned to Brest, after an absence of twenty-eight days of very active service, in which, besides taking and destroying many valuable vessels, he had thrown the coasts of Scotland and Ireland into consternation, occasioned the Irish Volunteers to be embodied, and obliged the English government to expend considerable sums in fortifying the harbours.

A teasing period of hopes and disappointments followed. The French ministry, to testify their good will to the United States, had promised to furnish Paul Jones with a ship, in which, however, he was to display the American flag; but, after various written memorials, no progress seemed to have been made towards the fulfilment of this engagement. At length he determined to apply in person, and having gone to Paris, he soon obtained the command of the Duc de Duras of forty guns. The name, however, he changed to *Le Bon-Homme Richard*, in compliment to the wise saying of Poor Richard, "If you would have your business done, come yourself; if not, send." In this vessel, badly manned, and not much better furnished, Paul Jones sailed as Commodore of a little squadron, consisting, besides his own ship, of the Alliance of thirty-six guns, the Pallas of thirty-two, the Serf of eighteen, the Vengeance of twelve, and two privateers, which requested leave to share the Commodore's fortunes. After taking several prizes, the Serf, the privateers, and at length the Alliance, deserted the squadron. The Commodore's good fortune, however, did not desert him. On the 15th September, he was, with his own ship, the Pallas, the Vengeance,



and several prizes, at the entrance into the Firth of Forth, where they made every necessary disposition to seize the guard-ship, and two cutters, that rode at anchor in the roads, and to lay Leith, and perhaps Edinburgh, under contribution. The wind, which was fair, in the night, opposed them in the morning. However, on the 16th, the little squadron continued all day to work up the Firth. At this time a member of the British Parliament observing them from the coast of Fife, and mistaking them for the King's ships, sent off a boat to inform the Commadore that he was greatly afraid of Paul Jones, and to beg some powder and shot. Our hero, much amused with the message, sent him a barrel of gunpowder, with a civil answer to quiet his fears, and an apology for not including shot in the present.

Next morning at day-break, every thing was in perfect readiness to commence the engagement, and two tacks more would have brought the strangers alongside their enemies, when, at that critical moment, a sudden gale of wind swept down the Firth, raging with such violence, as completely to overpower them, to sink one of the prizes, and drive all the rest of the squadron fairly out to sea. By this failure, the captains of the Pallas and Vengeance were so much disheartened, that they could not be prevailed on to renew the attempt.

Continuing their cruise, after various adventures, the squadron suddenly discovered the homeward-bound British Baltic fleet, off Scarborough castle, escorted by the frigate Serapis, and the Countess of Scarborough. After a long engagement, in which Paul Jones displayed the most astonishing skill, intre-









The Serapis and Bon-Homme Richard.



pidity, and presence of mind, the Countess of Scarborough struck to the Pallas, and the Serapis to the Bon-Homme Richard, which latter ship was reduced to so shattered a state, that next morning, after all hands had left her, she went to the bottom. The Serapis was not in much better condition, the Commodore having, with his own hands, lashed the two ships together, to prevent the enemy from availing himself of his superiority in weight of metal. The following is Paul Jones' own account of this famous battle :—

“ Soon after this a fleet of forty-one sail appeared off Flamborough Head, bearing N. N. E. This induced me to abandon the single ship which had then anchored in Burlington Bay ; I also called back the pilot-boat, and hoisted a signal for a general chase. When the fleet discovered us bearing down, all the merchant ships crowded sail towards the shore. The two ships of war that protected the fleet at the same time steered from the land, and made the disposition for battle. In approaching the enemy, I crowded every possible sail, and made the signal for the line of battle, to which the Alliance showed no attention. Earnest as I was for the action, I could not reach the Commodore's ship until seven in the evening, being then within pistol-shot, when he hailed the Bon-Homme Richard. We answered him by firing a whole broadside.

“ The battle being thus begun, was continued with unremitting fury. Every method was practised on both sides to gain an advantage, and rake each other ; and I must confess that the enemy's ship, being much more manageable than the Bon-Homme Richard,



gained thereby several times an advantageous situation, in spite of my best endeavours to prevent it.

As I had to deal with an enemy of greatly superior force, I was under the necessity of closing with him, to prevent the advantage which he had over me in point of manœuvre. It was my intention to lay the *Bon Homme Richard* athwart the enemy's bow; but as that operation required great dexterity in the management of both sails and helm, and some of our braces being shot away, it did not exactly succeed to my wish. The enemy's bowsprit, however, came over the *Bon-Homme Richard's* poop by the mizen-mast, and I made both ships fast together in that situation, which, by the action of the wind on the enemy's sails, forced her stern close to the *Bon-Homme Richard's* bow, so that the ships lay square alongside of each other, the yards being all entangled, and the cannon of each ship touching the opponent's.

"When this position took place, it was eight o'clock, previous to which the *Bon-Homme Richard* had received sundry eighteen-pound shots below the water, and leaked very much. My battery of twelve-pounders, on which I had placed my chief dependence, being commanded by Lieutenant Dale and Colonel Weibert, and manned principally with American seamen and French volunteers, was entirely silenced and abandoned. As to the six old eighteen-pounders that formed the battery of the lower gun-deck, they did no service whatever, except firing eight shot in all. Two out of three of them burst at the first fire, and killed almost all the men who were stationed to manage them. Before this time, too, Colonel de Chamillard, who commanded a party of twenty soldiers



on the poop, had abandoned that station after having lost some of his men. I had now only two pieces of cannon, (nine-pounders,) on the quarter-deck, that were not silenced, and not one of the heavier cannon was fired during the rest of the action. The purser, M. Mease, who commanded the guns on the quarter-deck, being dangerously wounded in the head, I was obliged to fill his place, and with great difficulty rallied a few men, and shifted over one of the lee quarter-deck guns, so that we afterwards played three pieces of nine-pounders upon the enemy. The tops alone seconded the fire of this little battery, and held out bravely during the whole of the action, especially the main-top, where Lieutenant Stack commanded. I directed the fire of one of the three cannon against the main-mast, with double-headed shot, while the other two were exceedingly well served with grape and canister shot, to silence the enemy's musketry and clear her decks, which was at last effected. The enemy were, as I have since understood, on the instant of calling for quarters, when the cowardice or treachery of three of my under-officers induced them to call to the enemy. The English Commodore asked me if I demanded quarters, and I having answered him in the most determined negative, they renewed the battle with double fury. They were unable to stand the deck; but the fire of their cannon, especially the lower battery, which was entirely formed of ten-pounders, was incessant; both ships were set on fire in various places, and the scene was dreadful beyond the reach of language. To account for the timidity of my three under-officers, I mean the gunner, the carpenter, and the master-at-arms, I must observe,



that the two first were slightly wounded and, as the ship had received various shot under water, and one of the pumps being shot away, the carpenter expressed his fears that she would sink, and the other two concluded that she was sinking, which occasioned the gunner to run aft on the poop, without my knowledge, to strike the colours. Fortunately for me, a cannon-ball had done that before, by carrying away the ensign-staff; he was therefore reduced to the necessity of sinking, as he supposed, or of calling for quarter, and he preferred the latter.

“All this time the Bon-Homme Richard had sustained the action alone, and the enemy, though much superior in force, would have been very glad to have got clear, as appears by their own acknowledgments, and by their having let go an anchor the instant that I laid them on board, by which means they would have escaped, had I not made them well fast to the Bon-Homme Richard.

“At last, at half-past nine o’clock, the Alliance appeared, and I now thought the battle at an end; but, to my utter astonishment, he discharged a broad-side full into the stern of the Bon-Homme Richard. We called to him for God’s sake to forbear firing into the Bon-Homme Richard; yet they passed along the off-side of the ship, and continued firing. There was no possibility of his mistaking the enemy’s ships for the Bon-Homme Richard, there being the most essential difference in their appearance and construction. Besides, it was then full moonlight, and the sides of the Bon-Homme Richard were all black, while the sides of the prize were all yellow. Yet, for the greater security, I showed the signal of our



reconnoissance, by putting out three lanterns, one at the head, another at the stern, and the third in the middle, in a horizontal line. Every tongue cried that he was firing into the wrong ship, but nothing availed; he passed round firing into the *Bon-Homme Richard*'s head, stern, and broadside, and by one of his volleys killed several of my best men, and mortally wounded a good officer on the forecastle only. My situation was really deplorable; the *Bon-Homme Richard* received various shot under water from the *Alliance*; the leak gained on the pumps, and the fire increased much on board both ships. Some officers persuaded me to strike, of whose courage and good sense I entertain a high opinion. My treacherous master-at-arms let loose all my prisoners without my knowledge, and my prospects became gloomy indeed. I would not, however, give up the point. The enemy's mainmast began to shake, their firing decreased fast, ours rather increased, and the British colours were struck at half an hour past ten o'clock.

"This prize proved to be the British ship of war the *Serapis*, a new ship of forty-four guns, built on the most approved construction, with two complete batteries, one of them eighteen-pounders, and commanded by the brave Commodore Richard Pearson. I had yet two enemies to encounter far more formidable than the Britons,—I mean fire and water. The *Serapis* was attacked only by the first, but the *Bon-Homme Richard* was assailed by both; there was five feet water in the hold, and though it was moderate from the explosion of so much gunpowder, yet the three pumps that remained could with difficulty only keep the water from gaining. The fire broke out in various



parts of the ship in spite of all the water that could be thrown in to quench it, and at length broke out as low as the powder-magazine, and within a few inches of the powder. In that dilemma I took out the powder upon deck, ready to be thrown overboard at the last extremity, and it was ten o'clock the next day (the 24th) before the fire was entirely extinguished. With respect to the situation of the *Bon-Homme Richard*, the rudder was cut entirely off, the stern-frame and transoms were almost entirely cut away, and the timbers by the lower deck, especially from the mainmast towards the stern, being greatly decayed with age, were mangled beyond my power of description, and a person must have been an eye-witness to form a just idea of the tremendous scene of carnage, wreck, and ruin, which every where appeared. Humanity cannot but recoil from the prospect of such finished horror, and lament that war should be capable of producing such fatal consequences.

“After the carpenters, as well as Captain Cottineau and other men of sense, had well examined and surveyed the ship, (which was not finished before five in the evening,) I found every person to be convinced that it was impossible to keep the *Bon-Homme Richard* afloat, so as to reach a port, if the wind should increase, it being then only a very moderate breeze. I had but little time to remove my wounded, which now became unavoidable, and which was effected in the course of the night and next morning. I was determined to keep the *Bon-Homme Richard* afloat, and, if possible, to bring her into port. For that purpose, the first lieutenant of the *Pallas* continued



on board with a party of men, to attend the pumps, with boats in waiting, ready to take them on board in case the water should gain on them too fast. The wind augmented in the night, and the next day, the 25th, so that it was impossible to prevent the good old ship from sinking. They did not abandon her till after nine o'clock; the water was then up to the lower deck, and a little after ten I saw, with inexpressible grief, the last glimpse of *the Bon-Homme Richard*. No lives were lost with the ship, but it was impossible to save the stores of any sort whatever. I lost even the best part of my clothes, books, and papers; and several of my officers lost all their clothes and effects.

“Having thus endeavoured to give a clear and simple relation of the circumstances and events that have attended the little armament under my command, I shall freely submit my conduct therein to the censure of my superiors and the impartial public. I beg leave, however, to observe, that the force that was put under my command was far from being well composed, and as the great majority of the actors in it have appeared bent on the pursuit of *interest* only, I am exceedingly sorry that they and I have been at all concerned.”

Such is the despatch which Commodore Jones transmitted from the Texel to Dr. Franklin, and afterwards to Congress.

The Commodore now took the command of the *Serapis*, erected jury-masts, and with some difficulty conveyed his prizes to the Texel. Paul Jones, who never suffered the interests of his fellow-citizens to be lost sight of, exerted all his influence with the



French court to have it arranged that his prisoners should be exchanged against American prisoners in England, and he completely succeeded. Dr. Franklin, the minister of the United States at Paris, soon cheered his heart, by writing to him, that "he had then completed the glorious work he had so nobly begun, by giving liberty to all the Americans who then languished for it in England." On this occasion, too, the King of France directed his ambassador at the Hague to communicate to Commodore Paul Jones the high personal esteem he bore for his character, especially for his disinterestedness and humanity.

The Captain of the Alliance being ordered to Paris, to answer for his insubordination, Jones took the command of that vessel; but he now found himself environed with dangers. The Dutch were summoned to deliver him up to the vengeance of the English government, as a pirate and a rebel; and they were most reluctantly constrained to order him out to sea, where an English squadron was watching to pounce upon him as their certain prey. The acceptance of a commission from the King of France would have saved him from this dilemma, and the ambassador from his Most Christian Majesty repeatedly urged him to adopt that alternative, but he thought his honour engaged to decline it. He would not, at whatever risk, abandon the flag of his beloved America. He, however, contrived to make his escape, passing the Straits of Dover, and the Isle of Wight, before the very beards of the English fleets.

Towards the close of 1780, our hero sailed for America, in the *Ariel*, with important despatches, and



having encountered in his passage the *Triumph*, an English vessel of twenty guns, he forced her to strike.

A little before this time, the King of France had testified his approbation of Paul Jones's services, by presenting him with a superb gold sword; and a letter from M. de Sartaine now reached the President of the United States, requesting liberty "to decorate that brave officer with the cross of the order of military merit." The demand was laid before Congress, and a law having been passed on the 27th February, acceding to it, he was formally invested by the Chevalier de la Luzerne, at a public fete given to the members of that legislative body. In April following, on the report of a committee, Congress passed a vote of thanks to the Chevalier Paul Jones "for the zeal, prudence, and intrepidity with which he had sustained the honour of the American flag; for his bold and successful enterprises to redeem from captivity those citizens of America who had fallen under the power of the enemy; and, in general, for the good conduct and eminent services by which he had added lustre to his character, and to the arms of America."

During the remainder of the war with England, he had no opportunity to signalize himself. After it was over, Congress, as an expression of gratitude, caused a gold medal to be struck, with appropriate legends and devices, to perpetuate the memory of his valour and services. The annexed engraving, executed in the ruled manner from a duplicate of the medal, by Mr. Asa Spencer, the inventor of the machine for medal ruling, gives an accurate resemblance of it.



In 1787, the United States having charged the Chevalier with a mission to the court of Denmark, he set sail for that country in the month of November, and, passing through Paris in his way, was strongly solicited to assume the command of the Russian fleet in the Black Sea. Soon after his arrival at Copenhagen, a courier, sent express by the Empress Catharine, conveyed to him an urgent invitation to St. Petersburg. Although he saw many reasons for declining to engage in the service of that potentate, he was flattered by the offer, and felt himself bound at least to thank her Majesty in person. He, therefore, set out instantly for her Court, by the way of Sweden; but at Greshelham found the passage of the Gulf of Bothnia blocked up by ice. After several unsuccessful attempts to proceed to Finland by the islands, he conceived that it might be practicable to effect his object by doubling the ice to the southward. The enterprise was formidable, and altogether new; but our hero was not easily daunted. Without making known his intentions to his companions, he set sail from Greshelham one morning very early, in an open boat about thirty feet long, followed by a little one to haul over the ice. Towards evening, having got nearly opposite to Stockholm, our adventurer, producing his pistols, ordered the astonished boatmen to pursue the route which he had secretly devised. Resistance was vain, and he was obeyed. All night the wind was favourable, and they hoped to reach the coast of Finland in the morning; but they found themselves opposed by an impenetrable barrier of ice. Neither was it possible, from the state of the weather to return. The only



resource was to make for the Gulf of Finland. When night came on, they steered by the aid of a pocket-compass, lighted by the lamp of the Chevalier's carriage; and, at the end of four days, after having lost the smaller of their two boats, they terminated a perilous and fatiguing voyage at Revel, in Livonia.

The Chevalier was graciously received at the Court of St. Petersburg; and, no longer opposing the wishes of the Empress, attached himself to her service, under this single condition, "That he should never be condemned unheard."

He proceeded, without delay, with the rank of Rear Admiral, to take the command of the fleet stationed at the Liman, or mouth of the Dneiper, and oppose the Turkish fleet under the Captain Pacha. On the 26th May, 1788, he hoisted his flag on board the *Wolodimer*. His squadron was supported by a flotilla under the Prince of Nassau, and land forces under Prince Potemkin. Our limits forbid us to follow Admiral Jones through this campaign. It afforded him many opportunities of displaying his characteristic intrepidity and professional skill; but mean jealousy and malignant cabals deprived him of much well-earned glory. He was, however, invested with the order of St. Anne, as an acknowledgment of his fidelity: and, on his arrival at St. Petersburg, he was told that he was destined for a more important service. Disgusted, however, by the intrigues of selfish men, he left Russia in August, 1789, and never returned.

The remainder of his days he spent partly in Holland, and partly in France. He collected a number of important documents relative to the public trans-

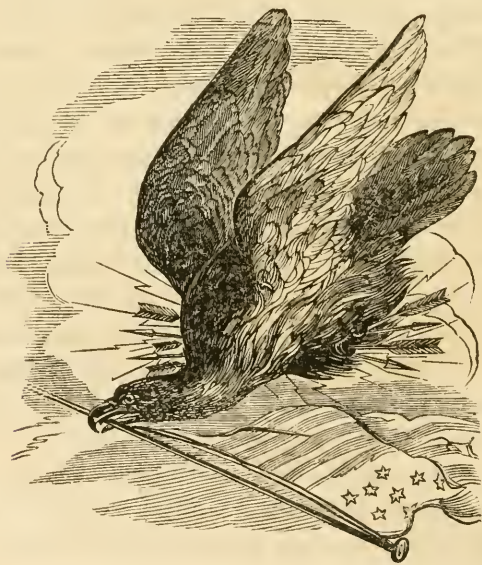


actions in which he had been actively concerned ; and, as if he had foreseen that he was not to be long-lived, he devoted much of his leisure to the arrangement of his affairs, and to the preparation of papers, which should exhibit his character and services in their true light to his friends and to posterity.

He died at Paris of a dropsy in the chest, in July, 1792, having barely completed his forty-fifth year. His funeral was attended by a deputation of the National Assembly, and an oration was pronounced over his tomb by M. Marron.

Among the Admiral's papers were found memoirs of his life, written with his own hand ; a most interesting literary production ; from these papers the above sketch was drawn up.\*

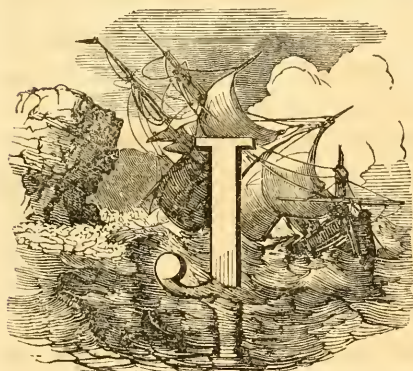
\* Edinburgh Encyclopædia.







RICHARD DALE.



DALE, lieutenant in the famous action with the *Seerapis*, is the subject of the present memoir.

RICHARD DALE was born on the sixth of November, 1756, in Norfolk county, Virginia. He is descended from a family highly respectable, though not wealthy. His parents were both natives of Virginia. His father left five children of whom Richard was the eldest. Having manifested, from an early period of life, a strong predilection for the sea, his friends were induced to



comply with his wishes. Accordingly, when only twelve years of age, he entered on board a vessel commanded by his uncle, with whom he sailed from Norfolk for Liverpool, in November, 1768. He returned the following summer, and remained at home until the spring of 1770, when he was bound apprentice to colonel Thomas Newton, a respectable merchant of Norfolk. In the employ of that gentleman he made several voyages to the West Indies, during which nothing of moment occurred, except two accidents, which are worthy of notice only as being the commencement of a series of misfortunes that awaited him. The first was a fall which he received from the spars, lying across the belfry and the gallows, a distance of eighteen or twenty feet, without, however, sustaining any material injury. The other was of a nature no less formidable. As the vessel was going rapidly before the wind, he was knocked overboard by the jib-sheet, and was not, without much difficulty, rescued from so perilous a situation, after having been in the water about an hour.

In 1775, we find him the chief officer of a valuable brig belonging to Colonel Newton, in which, to the entire satisfaction of his employer, he continued to the spring of the following year. A period had now arrived that opened to his adventurous disposition, prospects much more congenial and tempting than those which arise out of the service of the merchant. The war of the revolution had commenced; and he had too much of the feelings and temperament of the soldier to remain inactive. He is, accordingly, presented to us in the early part of the year 1776, engaged as lieutenant on board a



vessel of war, belonging to the state of Virginia, which was fitting out not far from City Point, near Norfolk.

While in the execution of his orders to go to Sandy Point, in James river, in a small river craft, for the purpose of procuring cannon, he was captured by a tender belonging to the Liverpool frigate, carried to Norfolk, and put on board a prison ship, in which he was confined for several weeks.

During the time he remained in this situation, he was visited by Bridges Gutteridge, who had been his schoolmate, but who had not yet declared in favour of the popular cause, having then the command of a tender in the service of the enemy. After much solicitation, and many plausible and seductive arguments, our young adventurer was induced to join the fortunes of his former companion and friend. In May (1776) they made a cruise together up the river Rappahannock, during which they had an engagement with several pilot boats, and were happy to escape, with the loss of several men killed; young Dale himself being badly wounded, having received a musket ball in his head. He was carried to Norfolk, where he was confined a long time by his wound. This period he improved to the salutary purposes of reflection, and of firmly resolving, to use his own words, "never again to put himself in the way of the balls of his country." Soon after his recovery, upon his return from Bermuda—whither he had gone with William Gutteridge—he was captured by Captain John Barry, commander of the United States brig Lexington, and on the same day entered as a midshipman on board said brig. This



occurred in July 1776. Not long afterwards, the brig, whilst cruising, was struck with lightning; Dale, with many others, was prostrated senseless, upon the deck. They were all, however, providentially restored in a few minutes. Soon after this the brig arrived at Philadelphia. Dale still continued in the same vessel the command of which now devolved on Captain Hallock—Captain Barry having been appointed to the command of a frigate.

The Lexington sailed in the autumn of 1776 for Cape François, and a cruise. On her return to the United States, in December following, she was captured by the Liverpool frigate, off the capes of Virginia. In consequence of a sudden and tremendous gale, the captors could only take out the captain and five of the crew: Dale, who was then master's mate, being one of the number. The officers and crew, who remained on board, retook the brig and carried her into Baltimore. Dale was landed, with some of his fellow prisoners, at Cape Henlopen, in January 1777. He immediately repaired to Philadelphia, which he had no sooner reached, than he was ordered to join the Lexington again, now commanded by Captain Henry Johnson. This vessel sailed from Baltimore for Bordeaux, in February or March, with despatches. Her passage was short and very successful, many valuable prizes being taken by her, without delay she proceeded to Nantz, to join the United States ship Reprisal, of sixteen six-pounders, Captain Wicks, and a cutter, commanded by Samuel Nicholson, carrying ten four-pounders; the three vessels to cruise in company, under the command of Captain Wicks.



This little squadron sailing from Nantz on a cruise, in May, (1777,) took and sunk many prizes, and did great injury to the coasting trade of the British islands. In the English channel they fell in with an English seventy-four which gave them chase. In consequence of this it became necessary for the vessels of the squadron to separate. They soon afterwards reached French ports; the Reprisal having had a very narrow escape, which was not effected without the loss of her guns.

After a detention of the vessels, by the French government, for more than two months—for some cause which was never explained—young Dale sailed in the Lexington from Morlaix for the United States, on the 18th September, 1777. On the following morning, discovering a cutter ahead, lying by, they made all sail and stood directly for her. They soon discovered her to be an English cutter, mounting ten six-pounders. An action was commenced by the cutter, between seven and eight o'clock, A. M.; at which time, such had been the extreme negligence of the commanders of the Lexington, in not making the necessary preparations for action, that there was not even a match ready. They were, therefore, obliged to fire their guns by means of their muskets, until matters were in a state of better preparation. The action became very warm. A calm succeeding, the Lexington could not get as near the enemy as was wished. The action was sustained for nearly two hours with the most determined resolution. This, considering the manifold and heavy disadvantages under which the American vessel laboured, was not a little astonishing, and must be regarded as evincive of that



heroic, unconquerable gallantry, which is now an acknowledged characteristic of American seaman. Being, however, much cut to pieces, with the loss of several brave officers and men, and having expended almost their last shot, the American commander deemed it prudent to avail himself of a breeze, which just then sprang up, to crowd sail and get off. In this he succeeded for a short time; but, between one and two o'clock, P. M., the cutter overtook him. The action was renewed with increased obstinacy on both sides. Having maintained the unequal conflict for one hour—not only the shot of every description, but all the iron, and other articles which could be used as a substitute for shot, being expended—the brig reduced literally to a wreck—the first lieutenant, sailing-master, captain of marines, and a number of men being killed, and many more officers and men severely wounded,—no alternative was left but to strike their flag to the cutter.

Notwithstanding its unsuccessful issue, we cannot but consider this action as reflecting lustre upon the American name; particularly when we take into view, the great superiority in the crew of the cutter, which not only exceeded that of the Lexington in numbers, but consisted entirely of picked men. Of the Lexington, on the other hand, both the officers and crew were without experience, but few of them having ever been in an engagement before.

About three or four days after this action, the surviving officers and crew of the Lexington arrived in Plymouth. The former underwent a rigorous examination before twelve judges, the object of which was to ascertain to what country they belonged.



Both officers and men were committed to Mill prison, upon a charge of high treason. In this loathsome abode, they were subjected to a most cruel and severe confinement. They were exposed, moreover, to every indignity which was thought due to men considered as rebels, and suffered every privation that could embitter the loss of liberty, or add to the pain and mortification so intolerable to their high and patriotic spirits, of being rendered useless to their country, at this most interesting and momentous crisis. In this situation they remained four or five months, when, in consequence of a general complaint respecting the treatment of American prisoners, and of the sympathy which their sufferings had excited even in the hearts of their enemies, the sum of sixteen or seventeen thousand pounds sterling, was subscribed for the benefit of these unfortunate men. The subscribers appointed a committee to inquire into the matter, who, with the sanction of the government, visited the prison, supplied the Americans with money, provisions, and clothing; in short, with every thing that could alleviate their sufferings, and render their condition supportable. It is gratifying to record such acts of disinterested philanthropy: they dignify and ennoble our nature, and are worthy of universal imitation. Notwithstanding their situation was thus rendered as comfortable as a state of confinement could be, they were determined upon attempting an escape. Captain Johnson having communicated his plan to young Dale, and every arrangement having been made, they effected their purpose at night, in the month of February, 1778. After wandering about for more than a week, encountering every difficulty,



and suffering still more severe privations, they determined, as the best means of avoiding detection, to divide their company and pursue different courses. After a variety of adventures, Dale and his companions reached London, and immediately embarked on board a trading vessel bound to Dunkirk. The tide being ahead they could not proceed far. On the same day, while at anchor, an officer, with a press gang came on board, and arrested them on suspicion of being prisoners from Mill prison. The following day they underwent an examination, after which they were re-committed to the same prison from which they had escaped. Here, for forty days, they were confined in a dungeon, appropriately denominated the "black hole." After the expiration of this term, they were restored to the more enlarged liberty of the prison, but not to all those privileges and indulgences which had formerly rendered their situation comparatively comfortable.

About three months afterwards, Dale was again committed to the "black hole," for singing what were termed rebellious songs. In February 1779, he again escaped from prison, repaired without delay to London, where, by fortunate management and address, he procured a passport from the proper authority to go to France. In a very short time he arrived at L'Orient, where he joined, in the character of master's mate, the renowned Paul Jones, then commanding the American ship "Bon-Homme Richard." We have now reached a most interesting epoch in the life of our adventurer. He had hitherto acted in a very subordinate capacity, contending with difficulties the most discouraging, and adversities that would have subdued to despondency, a spirit less



resolute and inflexible than his. His bosom now beat high with exultation at the opening of brighter prospects. He beheld in the character of his commander, a pledge of happier fortunes, and enjoyed, in anticipation, a brilliant career of glory. After three months of unremitting employment, in manning the *Bon-Homme Richard*, in which great difficulty was experienced, Dale was selected by the discriminating eye of Captain Jones, to be his first lieutenant. This mark of approbation, from one who was so good a judge of merit, and knew so well how to appreciate it, gratified his ambition, and encouraged and animated his hopes of fame.

The *Bon-Homme Richard* sailed on a cruise about the latter end of July 1779, in company with the *Alliance* of thirty-six guns, the *Pallas* of thirty-two guns, the brig *Revenge* of sixteen guns, and a cutter of ten guns—all under the command of Paul Jones. They cruised very successfully for some time off the coast of Ireland, when, upon consultation with the different commanders, except Captain Landais, of the *Alliance*, who, on account of some misunderstanding, declined any communication with Captain Jones, it was determined to proceed to the North sea with the *Bon-Homme Richard*, the *Pallas*, and the *Revenge*. The town of Leith being marked out as the first object of attack, every preparation was made to set fire to it, unless the extremity should be prevented by a compliance with their terms—to wit, a ransom of two hundred and fifty thousand pounds sterling. Fortunately for the town, when they were within a short distance of it, a violent gale sprung up from W. S. W., which obliged them to run down the



Firth, and go to sea. Two or three days afterwards, when off North Shields, every thing was prepared to burn the shipping, and the harbour, but the captains of the *Pallas* and *Revenge*, thinking the adventure too hazardous, it was abandoned.

Since the commencement of their cruise, they had taken and destroyed many valuable vessels, and proved a most serious annoyance to the enemy's trade.

We come now to the most prominent circumstance in the life of our subject.—We allude to the engagement between the *Bon-Homme Richard* and the *Serapis*, an English forty-four—an engagement which was certainly one of the most interesting ever fought; and for deeds of gallant intrepidity, and noble daring, is not surpassed, if equalled, by any in the annals of naval history. Having given Jones's own account of this battle in the previous article, we shall here notice it more briefly.

On the nineteenth of September, 1779, the *Bon-Homme Richard*, the *Alliance*, the *Pallas*, and the *Revenge*, being off Flamborough head; on the north east coast of England, a fleet of several hundred vessels was descried. The *Alliance* joined the squadron that afternoon, not having been seen before since she parted company off Ireland. Her captain refused obedience to the signals from the *Bon-Homme Richard*, during the chase, and repeatedly fired into the *Bon-Homme Richard* during the action. The *Revenge* took no part in the action. The chase was discovered to be the Baltic fleet, homeward bound, under convoy of the *Serapis*, of forty-four, and the *Countess of Scarborough* of twenty guns. The commander of the *Serapis* made a signal for the



merchant ships to stand in for the shore. After some manœuvring on the part of the enemy, which did not evince a disposition to court an engagement, the Bon-Homme Richard brought the Serapis to close action: about the same time Captain Cottineau, of the Pallas, engaged the Countess of Scarborough. About ten P. M., the bowsprit of the Serapis got foul of the mizen rigging of the Bon-Homme Richard. While in this situation, the two ships were lashed together, the starboard bow of the former to the starboard quarter of the latter. A boarding party from the Serapis attempted to board. The officer who headed the boarders, and many men, having been killed, the rest fell back. The action now became very warm. The Serapis let go her anchor, expecting that the two ships would clear each other. She then brought up with her head to the wind—the Bon-Homme Richard with her stern to the wind alongside of each other. They remained in that situation till the Serapis struck her colours, which was done about twelve o'clock at night.

Properly to appreciate this splendid victory, we must take into view the great superiority of the enemy in the strength of his vessel, the number of his guns, the weight of his metal, and the amount of his crew; add to this the disadvantages under which the action was sustained for a very considerable time on the part of the Bon-Homme Richard.

The Serapis was what is denominated a double decked forty-four gun ship—she showed two rows of ports. She was almost a new vessel, and, in every respect, one of the finest, or, to speak more technically, one of the warmest frigates of her class.



The Bon-Homme Richard was an old ship, having made many voyages to the East Indies, for which trade she was originally designed. On the score of tonnage both vessels were about equal.

The Serapis, though rated a forty-four, mounted a greater number of guns; she carried twenty eighteen pounders on her lower deck, twenty-two nine pounders on her upper deck, and sixes on her quarter deck and forecastle—the precise number we are unable to state. The Bon-Homme Richard carried forty-two guns—six eighteen-pounders on her lower deck, twenty-eight twelves on her upper deck, and eight nines on her quarter deck and forecastle. With respect to the crews of the ships, they nominally, were equal; but from that of the Bon-Homme Richard there had been sent previously to the action, several detachments to man prizes. Besides this, just before discovering the Baltic fleet, a second lieutenant, a midshipman, and six men, were despatched in a pilot boat to take some small vessels that were in sight; these did not return till after the action; so that the crew was considerably reduced; and there was left on board but one lieutenant, and a very inadequate number of subordinate officers. The crew of this ship, moreover, was a heterogeneous compound of Americans, and natives, and subjects of almost all the European nations—so that in conversation many of them could not understand each other.

Besides these original disadvantages, there were others of a more alarming nature, which were the consequence of accident during the battle, or of damage received from the enemy, under which, however, the bloody conflict was maintained for one hour.



Two of the eighteen pounders on the lower deck burst the first fire, and did considerable damage; they blew up part of the upper gun-deck. The guns in that direction were no longer serviceable. Many men were killed and wounded by the accident. About an hour before the enemy struck their colours, it was reported and believed on board the Bon-Homme Richard, that she was sinking. So great was the consequent alarm that the master at arms let loose all the prisoners, who had been confined in the after hold, that they might, in the general effort to preserve life, take care of themselves. They became exceedingly terrified, and occasioned much confusion on board. The pumps were constantly at work. The carpenter was ordered into the pump-well to ascertain the depth of water in the ship. His report was, that it was up to his chin. Lieutenant Dale was then ordered down to the lower deck, to see how near the water was to the lower ports. To allay the excessive alarm, he reported that he did not perceive that she had settled much in the water. At this critical juncture, one of the captains, who had been left out of confinement jumped on board the Serapis, and informed her captain, that if he would hold out a little longer the American ship must strike or sink; adding, that in order to give them a chance for their lives, all the prisoners had been released. At this dreadful and critical moment, moreover, the action on the part of the American ship was completely at a stand, in consequence of the communication with the magazine being stopped. The sentinels who were placed in the passage leading to the magazine, seeing many strange faces, deemed it prudent to



bar all access to it. Lieutenant Dale went below to ascertain the cause of withholding the powder. He now, for the first time, knew that the prisoners had been let out. Having explained the matter to the sentinels, and taken the proper precautions against a recurrence of the difficulty he returned to the deck. By this time the contest was reduced to three guns on the enemy's lower deck, and three on the quarter deck of the *Bon-Homme Richard*.

About this period a circumstance occurred, which, as it is characteristic of Captain Jones, may be worthy of notice. The surgeon of the ship came up from the cock-pit in great apprehension, and asked the Captain if he would not strike, as the vessel was sinking? "What! doctor," said Jones, "would you have me strike to a drop of water? Here, help me get this gun over." The doctor, however, not caring to step beyond the sphere of his immediate duty, soon found his way back to the cock-pit.

Our readers will, no doubt, inquire after the fate of the other vessels originally in company with the *Bon-Homme Richard*. It will be recollected that the *Pallas* engaged the *Countess of Scarborough*. The action was maintained for some time with great spirit. Victory, at length, declared in favour of the *Pallas*, the American ship. It is with pain that we take any notice of Captain Landais, of the *Alliance*; but his conduct is a necessary link in the chain of our narrative. Besides, a statement of it is necessary to account for the comparatively unfavourable result of the engagement—unfavourable so far as regards the disappointment of the hopes of the American officers, of taking or destroying the whole of the convoy.



Landais paid no regard to the signals from the Bon-Homme Richard during the chase and action; but at the commencement of the action the Alliance took her station between the Serapis and Bon-Homme Richard, and the Countess of Scarborough and Pallas. In this situation she remained perfectly inactive and aloof from danger, until the Countess of Scarborough struck to the Pallas; whereupon, Landais made sail for the Pallas, to know what ship she had taken, and also to ascertain what ship was engaged with the Bon-Homme Richard. Upon receiving the information sought for, he made sail towards the latter ship, with the intention, as he afterwards said, of assisting her. It was not long, however, before he reached her; and when he did, he was hailed and ordered to lay the Serapis aboard on the larboard side—but, notwithstanding the night signals were made, and the night was sufficiently light to discover the relative situation of the two ships—disregarding his orders, he fired a broadside into the Bon-Homme Richard, which killed her master's mate, boatswain's mate, and wounded many of her men, without doing any injury to the enemy. After this Landais stood some distance on his course, and then tacking, ran down athwart the stern of the Serapis, and the Bon-Homme Richard's bows, and fired another broadside, which raked both ships.

Shortly after this, the Serapis struck her colours. Lieutenant Dale swung, by means of a rope, from the deck of the Bon-Homme Richard to that of the Serapis. He was the first on board, and was followed by a midshipman and several men. There was but one man on the deck of the Serapis at this time;



the rest were below. Those on the upper gun-deck, not knowing that their flag was struck, made a feeble resistance, which was soon overcome, and quiet possession taken of the ship.

The condition of the ships was such as might be expected from the length and sanguinary obstinacy of the engagement. They had been lying nearly two hours alongside of each other, at such close quarters, that in loading the guns, the rammers touched the side, or were protruded into the port-holes of the other ship. The wadding lodged in the rigging and hulls; and, at times, both vessels were literally enveloped in flames.

During the action one of the men in the main-top of the *Bon-Homme Richard*, ventured out on the main-yard, which passed directly over the main-hatchway of the *Serapis*, and dropped some hand-grenades into her. These coming in contact with some cartridges which had been left on the decks, the whole exploded, and the consequences were most destructive, very few of those who were near escaping unhurt.

Lieutenant Dale, after taking possession of the ship, found himself deprived of the use of one of his legs, in consequence of a severe wound which he had received in the ankle, but which he had scarcely felt during the bustle of the engagement. On board the *Bon-Homme Richard* there were forty-nine killed, and sixty-seven wounded; many of the latter having lost their arms and legs. According to the accounts of the officers of the *Serapis*, at the time, her amount of killed and wounded were precisely the same.

The *Bon-Homme Richard* being in a very shattered



condition, and it being impossible to free her of water, it was thought best to abandon her. Her crew was accordingly removed to the *Serapis*. She sunk the next day. The rest of the squadron sailed for the Texel, where they arrived in eight or ten days. Here Captain Jones took the command of the *Alliance*, Landais having been ordered to proceed to Paris, and thence to America to stand a trial for his extraordinary conduct during the cruise and action. The captain of the *Pallas* took command of the *Serapis*. The *Alliance* sailed from the Texel, in January 1780, on a cruise, and arrived at L'Orient in the following March. Jones went to Paris;—Landais, who arrived at L'Orient in his absence, availed himself of this opportunity to attempt a recovery of the command of the *Alliance*. By tampering with many of the officers who had served with him, and aided by the influence of Arthur Lee, one of our public functionaries at the French Court, who was not well disposed towards Jones, he succeeded in attaining his object. Landais endeavoured to prevail upon Lieutenant Dale to join him. But he remained faithful to his commander, refusing to acknowledge the authority of Landais, and avowed himself willing and anxious to attempt the recovery of the ship, even at the hazard of his life. The King of France authorised Jones to use the guns of the fort to stop the *Alliance*. He did not, however, avail himself of this authority, as he was unwilling to hazard the serious consequences that would have ensued to the ship and her crew. The *Alliance* sailed for America in July.

The King accommodated Jones with the *Ariel*, a



British twenty-gun ship that had been captured by a French frigate. After some time spent in manning her, and preparing her for sea, they sailed for America in October. They had not proceeded far, when they were reduced to the greatest extremity of distress, in consequence of a tremendous gale. They were obliged to return to port, where they refitted, and sailing again for America about the 1st of January, 1781, arrived at Philadelphia on the eighteenth of February following. In May 1781, the bay of Delaware was much infested by the refugees, who intercepted supplies going to Philadelphia. The schooners belonging to the state were armed and manned from the Ariel, Lieutenant Dale was ordered by Jones to proceed with them down the bay, to disperse these marauders, and convoy the public stores to the city. This service was successfully executed.

About this time Jones was appointed to the command of a seventy-four, then building to the northward. He solicited Lieutenant Dale to go with him; a proposal which he declined, thinking it would be a long time before she would be ready for sea.

In June, Lieutenant Dale was appointed to the Trumbull frigate, of thirty-two guns, commanded by captain James Nicholson. That vessel sailed from the Capes of Delaware, some time in July 1781. She had been out but a few hours, when she fell in with a British frigate and sloop of war. They gave chase to the Trumbull. The latter had her fore-topmast and fore-topgallant-mast carried away in the chase, and was otherwise much crippled in her sails and rigging. The night being exceedingly dark and stormy, Captain Nicholson supposed he might elude



the enemy by putting his ship about before the wind ; this was done—but he had not proceeded far before he found his ship immediately alongside of the enemy, who seemed to have anticipated this manœuvre. So great was the surprise, that the Trumbull was entirely unprepared—the men not at their quarters, and it was with great difficulty that they could man even a few of their guns. Under these circumstances, having been so much crippled by the gale, and the enemy's force being so vastly superior, the Trumbull struck her colours, after a spirited but short resistance. Lieutenant Dale was wounded in this rencontre.

The second day after this he arrived at New York, a prisoner, and was put on parole at Long Island ; he was soon afterwards exchanged, and returned to Philadelphia, in November 1781.

The government having no immediate occasion for his services, he engaged in the merchant service ; having no relish for an inactive life. He entered on board the *Queen of France*, a large ship mounting twelve sixes—first, as chief officer, afterwards as captain. In the latter capacity he sailed in the spring of 1782, for L'Orient, in company with a formidable squadron of letters of marque. During the voyage they made many valuable prizes. The *Queen of France* having separated from the rest of the squadron fell in with a British privateer brig, mounting fourteen sixes. A severe conflict ensued in which both vessels sustained very serious damage. They parted by mutual consent. Captain Dale returned to Philadelphia, in February 1783.

Upon the conclusion of peace, there was no provision made for the navy nor its officers. Captain Dale



became interested in a large ship in the London trade in the command of which he sailed for London, in December 1783. From this period to May, 1790, we find him, unremittingly and lucratively employed in the East India trade in which he commanded several of the finest ships engaged in that employ. In September 1791, he married, and until June 1794, continued engaged in the merchant service.

About the latter period, the government appointed six captains for the naval establishment, for which provision had just been made. Captain Dale was one of them, and the fourth in rank. He was appointed to superintend the building of a frigate of the first class, at Norfolk. The government, however, afterwards deferred building her. He immediately obtained a furlough, and sailed in the command of a valuable ship for Canton. He continued industriously engaged in this trade till May 1798, when he commanded the ship *Ganges*. About this period our disputes with France seemed to be approaching to a crisis. War was generally expected. Under this apprehension the government purchased several large ships, for the purpose of converting them into men of war. Captain Dale was appointed to the command of the *Ganges*, one of the purchased ships. She was equipped for service; mounted twenty-nine pounders, and had a crew of one hundred and fifty men. Soon after this, some misunderstanding arose with respect to rank: Captain Dale obtained a furlough until the matter could be adjusted. In May 1799, he sailed for Canton, in the command of the ship *Canton*, mounting twenty guns, with a crew of seventy men. He returned to Philadelphia, in April 1800, and was happy to find



that the point of rank had been settled to his entire satisfaction. He received orders from the navy department to hold himself in readiness, as employment would soon offer. Accordingly in May 1801, he was appointed to the command of the squadron of observation, about to sail from Hampton Roads to the Mediterranean. On the twenty-first of May he hoisted his broad pendant on board the frigate *President*. On the first of June he sailed with the squadron, consisting of the following vessels: The *President*, Captain James Barron; the *Philadelphia*, Captain Samuel Barron; the *Essex*, Captain William Bainbridge; and the schooner *Enterprize*, Lieutenant Andrew Stewart. The squadron arrived at Gibraltar on the first of July. They found lying there, the high-admiral of Tripoli, in a ship mounting twenty-six nines and sixes, and two hundred and sixty men; and a brig of sixteen guns, and one hundred and sixty men. He had arrived only the day before the squadron. It was very evident that the Bey of Tripoli had declared, or was about to declare war against the United States; and that it was the intention of the Admiral to cruise against the American vessels in the Western ocean although he disavowed any knowledge of hostile intentions on the part of the Bey his master. Had the Admiral got out, he would have swept the ocean of the American trade, which at that time was very active in those seas. It became an object of primary importance to prevent his escape; and for this purpose Captain Samuel Barron, of the *Philadelphia* frigate, was ordered by the Commodore to lie off Gibraltar, in order to watch the movements of the Admiral, and if he ventured out, to capture him.



Despairing of eluding the vigilance of the blockading squadron, the Admiral very soon dismantled his vessels and discharged his crews; and thus one considerable means of annoyance was, to all useful purposes, destroyed.

The hostile intentions of the Bey were placed beyond a doubt, by authentic information obtained in the Mediterranean.

After distributing the other vessels of the squadron, in different directions, wherever their protection was most needed by the American trade, the Commodore repaired to Tripoli—arriving off that place in July. He opened a correspondence with the Bey, without producing any satisfactory results. A strict blockade of the port was kept up for some time.

Nothing could have been more opportune than the arrival of the squadron in the Mediterranean at that time, as the Tripolitan corsairs had been ordered to capture all American vessels they should fall in with. So efficient was the protection given to the American trade, by the vigilance and exertions of every officer of the squadron, that not a single capture was made.

In March 1802, the Commodore sailed for the United States, and arrived in Hampton Roads in April following. In the fall of 1802, he received an order from the Navy Department to hold himself in readiness to take command of the squadron which was to sail in the following spring for the Mediterranean. In the order, he was informed that he could not have a captain under him, as he had before. However sensible of the honor conferred upon him, in thus selecting him the second time for so important a command, he did not hesitate to decline the appoint-



ment. A proper regard for the honour of his country, and for his own character, would not permit him to return to the command in a less dignified station than he had enjoyed before. The alternative was presented, of accepting, under such humiliating terms, or resignation. The Commodore did not hesitate to choose the latter, particularly as there were captains out of employ who were anxious for the appointment.

Commodore Dale now relinquished his profession : but at a proper period he devoted his two sons to the naval service of his country, for which he still retained the liveliest interest. He entered into full communion with the Protestant Episcopal Church many years previous to his death, and in this relation sustained the character of a consistent Christian. He originated a Mariners' Church in Philadelphia, and for a number of years attended it in person every Sunday afternoon. His purse was ever open to aid the needy ; and much of his time was devoted to the bestowment of charity ; and he extended, particularly, a generous care over mariners, which was not confined to the interests of this life.

The close of Dale's life was calm and happy ; and although he was called to weep the loss of his eldest son, who received his death wounds on the President, in an action with a British squadron,—yet with the fortitude of a Christian and a patriot he could bear the afflictions, for he had devoted the youth to his country's service. Dale expired at Philadelphia, on the 26th of February, 1826, in peace with God and man.

Commodore Dale had several children, of whom three sons lived to the age of manhood. The eldest



fell a midshipman, on board the President; the second is now a commander in the navy; the youngest is a merchant of Philadelphia. Of his two daughters, the elder was married to Judge Pettit and is since deceased; and the younger is the wife of Commodore Read.

The character of Commodore Dale is thus described by Mr. Cooper:—

“In considering the character of Dale, we are struck with its simple modesty and frank sincerity, quite as much as with its more brilliant qualities. His courage and constancy were of the highest order, rendering him always equal to the most critical duties, and never wearying in their performance. Such a man is perfectly free from all exaggeration. As he was not afraid to act when his cooler judgment approved, he had no distrusts to overcome ere he could forbear, as prudence dictated. Jones found him a man ready and willing to second all his boldest and most hazardous attempts, so long as reason showed the probabilities of success; but the deed done, none more thoroughly stripped it of all false colouring, or viewed it in a truer light than he who had risked his life in aiding to achieve it.

“The person of Dale was in harmony with his moral qualities. It was manly, seaman-like, and of singularly respectable bearing. Simplicity, good faith, truth and courage were imprinted on his countenance, which all who were thrown into his company soon discovered was no more than the mirror of his mind. The navy has had more brilliant intellects, officers of profounder mental attainments, and of higher natural gifts, but it has had few leaders of cooler judgment, sounder discretion, more inflexible justice,



or indomitable resolution. He was of a nature, an experience, and a professional skill to command respect and to inspire confidence,—tributes that were cheerfully paid by all who served under his orders. The writer of this article has had extensive opportunities of hearing character discussed among the sea-officers of his country; few escape criticism, of some sort or other, for their professional acts, and fewer still as men; yet he cannot recall a single instance in which he has ever heard a whisper of complaint against the public or private career of Richard Dale. This total exemption from the usual fortunes of the race, may, in part, be owing to the shortness of the latter's service in the present marine, and to the limited acquaintance of his contemporaries; but it is difficult to believe that it is not chiefly to be ascribed to the thoroughly seaman-like character of the officer, and to the perfect truth and sterling probity of the man."







ALEXANDER MURRAY.



**C**OMMODORE ALEXANDER MURRAY, was born in Chestertown, Maryland, on the 12th day of July, 1755, of honest and respectable parents. From early life he was devoted to the watery element; and, at the age of eighteen, commanded a vessel in the European trade. The revolution shortly after breaking out, zealously



attached to the cause of his country, he forsook the merchant service, and was appointed a lieutenant in the First Maryland regiment, commanded by Colonel Smallwood. He had previously received an appointment to the same station in the navy, but as we had no frigate then in service, he entered the army. He took an early and conspicuous part in the hard-fought battles that ensued at Whiteplains, Flatbush, York, &c.

His sense of hearing was much impaired by the explosion of sundry pieces of cannon, on the New York battery, while firing at the enemy's fleet, on their passage up the North river. At the close of this campaign he was severely afflicted by chronic complaints, and was compelled to retire, soon after having been appointed to the rank of captain in the second regiment. At this time two hundred effective men only returned, out of nine hundred that marched from Annapolis; the rest having been either killed, or taken, or having fallen victims to the maladies of the camp. On the re-establishment of his health, Captain Murray resumed his rank in the navy. As there were no public ships ready for service, he was appointed, at various times, to command sundry letters of marque, repeatedly passing and repassing the enemy's fleet, and seldom escaping without a battle. One of these engagements is worthy of record:—Having been appointed to the command of the *Revenge*, a letter of marque, carrying eighteen six-pounders, with a complement of fifty men only, he sailed from Baltimore for Holland. He had the chief command of all the vessels then lying at that port, bound on foreign voyages, some of which were well



armed. Meeting with the enemy's force much superior, he was compelled to return with his fleet, consisting of forty vessels, and to seek refuge in the river Patuxent. The number afterwards increased to about fifty sail; the commanders of which all agreed to fight their way through the opposing squadron. With this determination they put to sea, when a fleet of privateers hove in sight. A signal was made for all the unarmed vessels to return, and for the remainder to rally round their commander. The enemy's fleet, consisting of one ship of eighteen guns, one brig of sixteen; and three privateer schooners, stood for the body of the fleet. One brig and one schooner only obeyed Captain Murray's signal to rally. He soon discovered himself lying between the ship and the brig, when a severe engagement ensued; Captain Murray kept up an incessant fire from both broadsides, and in an hour's time had the satisfaction to see his enemies haul off, after having sustained much damage. The brig and the schooner likewise behaved extremely well, and repelled the assaults of their adversaries. Captain Murray, after this action, returned to Hampton Roads to refit; his sails and rigging were much injured, but fortunately no lives were lost; few only were wounded, himself amongst the number.

After Captain Murray had repaired his vessel, he sailed for the banks of Newfoundland, and was unfortunately overtaken and surrounded by an English fleet, of one hundred and fifty men of war and transports, bound to New York. He was pursued and captured by a frigate. The captain and lieutenant were his intimate friends, from whom he received



every kindness and attention. He at last arrived in Philadelphia, where he was regularly exchanged.

The United States' frigate Trumbull, of thirty-two guns, commanded by his gallant friend and relation, the late Captain Nicholson, was then ready for service. This officer had before distinguished himself, in a very severe engagement off New York, with a British ship of war called the Wyatt. She was manned with a picked crew, and sent expressly to take the Trumbull. The action continued for two hours; both ships received much injury, and a dreadful carnage ensued. The British ship hauled off, and was towed into New York. The captain being asked the name of the Trumbull's commander, replied, that he must be either Paul Jones or the Devil—for never was a ship fought before with such frantic desperation. Captain Nicholson likewise put into port to repair; and when he sailed on his second cruise, Captain Murray volunteered his services as a lieutenant; and he had the pleasure of finding his gallant friend, the late Commodore Dale, one of the lieutenants on board likewise. In the midst of a violent gale, accompanied by thunder and lightning, the Trumbull lost her fore-topmast. When the storm abated, the crew discovered themselves to be close on board an English frigate. All hands, were, nevertheless, called to their quarters, and a dreadful action ensued. At the time when the enemy's fire began to slacken, it was discovered that most of the battle-lanterns were extinguished, and that the crew had fled from their stations. A second English ship was laid along the stern of the Trumbull, which poured in her raking broadsides, and put an end to the action.



Two of the lieutenants, with Lieutenant Murray, were severely wounded; and one-third of the crew were either killed or disabled. The Trumbull was the next day towed into New York, without a mast standing, and several of her gun-ports beat into one.

After Captain Murray had recovered from his wounds, he repaired to Baltimore, where he was furnished with another fine brig, a letter of marque. As he was unable to procure a complement of men and guns, he took a cargo of tobacco, and went on an intended voyage to St. Croix. When he sailed from Hampton Roads he had only five six-pounders on board, and the crew amounted to no more than twenty-five men. A privateer of fourteen guns, and one hundred men, came alongside, by superior sailing, and lay fast on his quarter. The five guns were brought to bear, and the privateer was repelled. Perceiving Captain Murray's weakness, the attack was renewed with redoubled fury, while his own guns were perpetually shifted from side to side, as occasion demanded. In attempting to board, the privateer was again driven back, but succeeded in carrying away the masts, leaving not a stick of timber standing but the mainmast and the stump of the bowsprit. A final and desperate attempt was at length made to board, but the crew of the privateer, with the loss of half their number, were again repulsed. This action continued for two hours. Captain Murray, after much hazard, arrived in safety at St. Thomas, where he made sale of his cargo.

Having refitted at this place, he captured a British packet by stratagem, in the Gulf of Florida, without firing a gun, and brought his prize into the Havanna.



An embargo was laid at this port in consequence of an expedition then fitting out against the Bahama islands, in which he obtained a command. Several other American vessels, lying in port, were armed and attached to this expedition, which set sail with a large fleet of Spanish transports, carrying five thousand men, under the American flag. Captain Murray arrived off new Providence, and the wind blowing hard, no alternative was left but either to attack a fort well mounted with heavy ordnance, or to be driven on shore by the violence of the gale. The former of these alternatives he adopted, and entering the port, summoned the fort to surrender. This was immediately done, and the Spanish flag waved triumphantly on the ramparts.

The Governor and his aid, (since the noted General Miranda,) who both sailed on board Captain Murray's ship, were engaged in forming the terms of capitulation. It was in vain suggested to Miranda, by the subject of the present memoir, that an unconditional surrender might be obtained, as the principal forts were then in their possession. Miranda, then a captain of the Spanish grenadiers, mortified at the thought that the Americans should have so large a share in the glory of the enterprise, made shameful and disgraceful terms of capitulation.

A controversy with Miranda ensued, which ended in a formal challenge on the part of Captain Murray. That officer, believing, with Falstaff, that "the better part of valour was discretion," refused to answer the call.

Captain Murray, after a successful voyage, arrived at Baltimore, and was ordered on board the Alliance



frigate, as first lieutenant, under the command of his old friend, the gallant Commodore Barry. Peace, in a short time, ensued between the United States and England; and after the ratification was signed, Captain Murray was the last officer who held a commission in the Naval service. He had been in thirteen battles in the army and navy, was frequently wounded, and often taken prisoner; which was the only thing that ever withdrew him, for a moment, from active and honourable engagement in the service. During the administration of President Adams, at the commencement of our hostilities with France, the name of Captain Murray was found amongst the first officers appointed in the navy. He repaired to Baltimore, and took the command of the United States' ship *Montezuma*, of twenty-four guns; cruised for eight months along the whole range of the West India islands, and convoyed nearly one hundred sail to the different ports of the United States, without the loss of a single vessel. Returning, he arrived at the Delaware, received the public thanks of the President, and was ordered to the command of the *Insurgent*. With a crew of three hundred and twenty men he repaired on board of this ship, and sailed under a roving commission. Understanding that the French frigate *Ambuscade* was in the neighbourhood of the West India islands, he cruised there for several weeks, and put into the port of Lisbon to recruit his provisions.

He next proceeded, in company with the British frigate *Phæton*, on board of which were Lord Elgin and suite, in quest of two French frigates, reported to be cruising off Cape St. Vincent, with whom he



sailed until her arrival at the Straits of Gibraltar. He then blockaded two large French corvettes in the bay of Cadiz; but hearing that a number of American vessels were watched by French privateers at Algaziras, he repaired to Gibraltar for information. Here Admiral Duckworth was anchored with a fleet of several ships of the line, from whom he received every testimonial of civility and kindness. He next cruised off Madeira and the Canary isles; but never obtained a sight of the enemy, the two corvettes excepted.

Receiving information that the French frigate *Volunteer*, of forty-four guns, was cruising off Cayenne, he arrived at that port, where he understood she had sailed for Guadaloupe. At length he discovered this frigate, of which he had been so long in chase, at Point Petre, where he blockaded her until all his provisions were consumed, and repaired to St. Christophers to recruit. On returning to renew the blockade, he fell in company with the *Constellation*, and learnt from the gallant Truxton that the frigate was the *Vengeance*. The particulars of that memorable battle are too well known to require a specific detail. The *Constellation*, then in a crippled state, and the *Insurgent*, sailed in company to Jamaica, for the purpose of refitting; where the two American officers experienced every kindness and courtesy from Sir Hyde Parker, who commanded on that station.

Captain Murray received orders from Havanna to return to America. Meeting with strong and heavy gales, and a lee current, the ship sustained much injury, and it was with the greatest difficulty that she was brought into Baltimore; thus terminating a cruise



of nine months, never longer than a week in one port, and his ship almost reduced to a wreck—the bolts and nails starting from her decks and sides in every gale.

Scarcely had he time to visit his family at Norfolk before he received orders to take the command of the *Constellation*, Commodore Truxton having been transferred to the *President*. His first cruise was for the Leeward islands, where he relieved Captain Talbot, of the *Constitution*, off Cape Français. He had several sloops of war, brigs, &c., under his command; and such were his arrangements, that our trade in that quarter was effectually protected—not a single capture having been made by the French cruisers.

While sailing in quest of the French frigate *Vengeance*, after the action with Commodore Truxton, he received information of her capture by the English. He was afterwards relieved by Captain Sevier, in the frigate *Congress*, and set out on his return to the Delaware. Passing through the Bahama Straits, he stopped at the Havanna, to convoy some American vessels, and was introduced to the Viceroy of Mexico and his lady, on their route to Spain, by whom he was noticed with every mark of cordial respect, participating in all the splendid entertainments given by them to the principal inhabitants of that place. His stores being replenished, he sailed for the Windward isles, and on his passage encountered a dreadful gale, where he had nearly foundered, and was on the eve of cutting away his masts, when the storm abated. He proceeded onward towards Guadaloupe, and fell in with the British frigate *Magnanimie*, of forty-four guns, in a dark night, from which a gun was fired



without the preliminary ceremony of showing a signal. At this moment, Captain Murray's wardroom-officers crowded around him, indignant at the insult offered to the American flag, and anxiously inquired if he did not intend to return the fire. He sternly ordered them instantly to their quarters, without deigning to give any other reply to their urgent interrogations. Disgusted, they obeyed the command, suspecting no very honourable motives for such haughtiness, coldness, and reserve. It requires but very little aid from fancy to observe by the light of the battle-lanterns, this little group of officers at their guns, bending their full, expressive, and indignant looks on their commander; their eyes gleaming with reproaches which their tongues dare not utter. From him they cast their eyes upon each other, and their silent glances, accompanied by shrugs and indignant smiles, emphatically expressed what opinion was prevalent. The captain, meanwhile maintaining a cold tranquillity of deportment, saw and enjoyed the scene, appearing perfectly unconscious of the impression which his orders had made. The silent interchange of thoughts and sensations—more eloquent, however, than all the powers of language—lasted for some time. Not a word was spoken—all was attention and dumb resentment. These officers, at length, to their astonishment and delight, received orders from their commander to return the salute with a full broadside. Another train of sensations occurred, and the frowns of anger were exchanged for gleams of the fondest admiration. The orders were promptly executed, when an explanation ensued, and precluded further hostility.



The next day he captured a French lugger, of eighteen guns, from which he received the first intelligence that preliminaries of peace had been signed between the two belligerents; and falling in with Admiral Duckworth, these tidings were confirmed. Arriving off Point Petre, he sent a flag of truce to the French commissioner, by whom he was invited on shore, and was received with every testimonial of respect. Feux de joie were fired from the forts as he passed, and during the two days of his residence at that place, all was hilarity and mirth. He communicated the pacific intelligence to the other American commanders with whom he fell in, and sailed with a convoy for Philadelphia.

The act of Congress reducing the navy was now passed, and the Commodore was one of the thirteen still retained in the service. He received orders to repair to the Mediterranean, to protect the American commerce in that quarter from the ravages of the Tripolitan cruisers. Commodore Truxton was originally destined to take the command in the Mediterranean; his controversy with government and his resignation are well known. Captain Murray, in the *Constellation*, sailed in pursuance of his orders, and when he arrived in the Straits, was informed by the British Admiral, Sir James Saumarez, that the *Philadelphia* and *Essex* frigates lay at Malaga, where the two commanders, Bainbridge and Barron, were anxiously waiting to be relieved. As senior officer, he permitted their return to the United States. While lying in that port, awaiting instructions from his government, he was informed by Lord Keith, the British admiral on that station, of the daily expecta-



tion of the arrival of his Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent. Desiring to pay the Royal Duke every mark of respect, the Admiral invited Commodore Murray to join, if it was not inconsistent with his arrangements. The Commodore, with his usual courtesy agreed, and the first rank was assigned to him after the Admiral's own flag. As soon as the royal standard was discovered in the bay, the British fleet, consisting of twelve sail, fired a salute, followed by the American frigates, and then the Portuguese and Danish men of war. The yards were all manned, and in this manner they escorted his Royal Highness on shore,—Lord Keith leading the van in company with the Royal Duke. They then repaired to the parade ground, where they were all presented to his Royal Highness in form, in the centre of a hollow square formed by a garrison of five thousand men. When this ceremony was ended, they marched round, and at the head of each regiment were received with military music, and a *feu de joie* was fired in rotation from all the cannon in the batteries.

Commodore Murray had a long and familiar conversation with his Royal Highness, which was several times repeated, and always with the warmest declarations of his respect and regard for the Americans. The next day he received a polite note from Lord Keith, in which the Admiral says, "I am commanded by his Royal Highness, the Duke of Kent, to make his public thanks to you, and to the officers commanding the American frigates, for their courtesy and attention to him yesterday, in his own person, and that of the British nation."

On the day following, the Philadelphia and Essex



having departed for the United States, Commodore Murray proceeded up the Mediterranean with valuable presents from his government to the Bey of Tunis, sent from England by our Minister, Mr. King, which he delivered. From this port he sailed for Tripoli, and fell in with the *Boston* and two Swedish frigates, with which he concerted a plan for a vigorous blockade. As the *Boston* was compelled to put into Malta to repair, and the Swedish ships of war to go away in quest of provision, Commodore Murray was left alone in sight of the town for several weeks. He repaired to Syracuse for provisions, and in the mean time very advantageous terms of peace were offered to him by the Bashaw; to which, as he had no powers from his own government, he was unable to accede.

He was once becalmed, when he was attacked by all the Tripolitan gun-boats, and the contest was maintained for an hour. A light breeze springing up, he brought his guns to bear, and distributed amongst them such showers of grape, that they never annoyed him afterwards.

Commodore Murray visited the ex-bashaw at Malta, where he went in quest of provisions. He was an interesting and well-disposed Turk, of free and easy manners. He detailed to the Commodore, at great length, the sufferings and oppressions imposed on him by his brother, and solicited his assistance; but the Commodore was unable to serve him, and could only breathe a fervent prayer for his success. His brother, the Bashaw, was a tyrant, whose heart was impenetrable to the touches of mercy and compassion.

He remained four months before Tripoli, awaiting



the orders of his government. At length he went to Palermo, to inquire if any American vessels required convoy, when he heard that Captain Morris, in the Chesapeake, had arrived in the Mediterranean. He touched at Naples, and remained there until his rudder was repaired, during which time he was introduced to the diplomatic corps, and to the principal nobility of the place, participating in all the courtesy and hospitality of their tables. These compliments he requited by invitations on board his frigate.

At Leghorn he met with Captain Morris, with whom he arranged all matters respecting his future course, and sailed down the Straits with a convoy. He proceeded as far as the Gulf of Lyons, encountering many severe gales, and was compelled to put into Malaga, for the purpose of fishing his mast, which had sprung by the violence of the gale. Here he met with Captain Rodgers, in the frigate John Adams, who put into his hands an open letter from the Secretary of the Navy, directed to Captain Morris, enjoining him to despatch the Constellation and some other vessels of war home. As Captain Morris was then thirteen hundred miles distant, he returned to America, after having informed that officer by letter of his motives for so doing. He sailed with a fleet of upwards of one hundred vessels, under his convoy, and arrived at Washington, where his ship was dismantled.

He remained for a period in the bosom of domestic retirement, from whence he was summoned to take command of the Adams, and cruise off the American coast, which was then infested with French privateers. He cruised for some time along the coasts of Carolina and Georgia, in a tempestuous season of the year,



until his ship was almost a wreck, when he returned to Washington, where she was laid up.

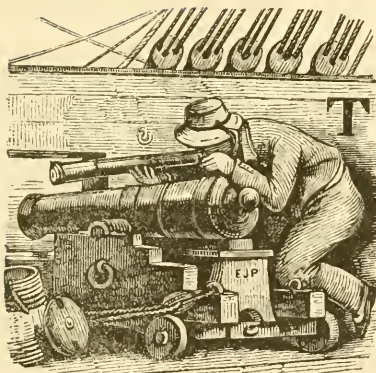
Commodore Murray's last appointment was that of commander of the navy-yard in Philadelphia,—a post in which he rendered important services, and gave universal satisfaction. He held it during the rest of his life. He died October 6, 1820, at his seat near Philadelphia. His remains were interred with the highest honours. He united to the highest firmness and resolution, a remarkable mildness and suavity of temper. Few men were personally more beloved. The invalid, the battered and disabled seaman, returning from the disasters of war or shipwreck, ever found in him a generous friend.







JOHN BARRY.



THE career of this distinguished officer commences with the infancy of our navy, and is marked by many brilliant services. His name occurs in connection with not a few of the more remarkable events in the history of

the revolutionary war, and always with credit to himself, and honour to the flag under which he sailed.

Few commanders in the navy were employed in a greater variety of service, or met the enemy under greater disadvantages. Yet, in no one of the numerous actions in which he was engaged, did Commodore Barry ever fail to acquit himself of his duty in a manner becoming a skilful seaman and an able warrior.



COMMODORE BARRY was born in the county of Wexford, in the Kingdom of Ireland, in the year 1745. His father was a highly respectable farmer ; under whose roof he received the first impressions of that ingenuousness, and that high-toned magnanimity which were conspicuous attributes of his character. At a very early age he manifested a strong inclination to follow the sea. His father was induced to gratify his desires, and he was put on board a merchantman, in which service he continued several years. The opportunities afforded by the intermissions of his voyages, were improved to his advantage, by applying himself to the acquisition of knowledge. Possessed of a strong and active mind, he was enabled, with indefatigable industry, to acquire a good parochial education.

In the fourteenth or fifteenth year of his age he arrived in America, which he immediately determined to make the country of his adoption. In his new situation he was not long without employment, but applied himself diligently to his new profession, and, in a very short time, his nautical skill, the steadiness of his habits, and the integrity of his character, recommended him, successively, to some of the most respectable merchants of that day. He was long in the service of Mr. Reese Meredith, Messrs. Willing and Norris, and Mr. Nixon. While in the employ of the latter gentleman, he commanded a very valuable ship, in the London trade, called the *Black Prince*, which was afterwards purchased by the Congress for a vessel of war. During his continuance with those gentlemen he possessed their unreserved confidence ; they always spoke of him in terms of the highest ap-



probation; his connection with them was the ground of a friendship, reciprocal, sincere, and lasting. He thus continued, growing in reputation, and acquiring, by industry and perseverance, a decent competency, until the controversy between the mother country and her then colonies gave a new direction to thought, and opened new prospects to ambition. He could not but feel a deep interest in passing events; he did not hesitate as to the part he should act, as the bias of his youth was in favour of liberty. At that interesting crisis, when Great Britain sent her veteran armies and powerful navies, to coerce a compliance with her unjust demands; and when all but men struggling for their liberty would have deemed resistance folly, it became important to select officers whose valour and discretion, whose experience and skill would give the utmost efficiency to our insignificant means of defence and annoyance. The rare union in Commodore Barry of all these qualities, recommended him to the notice of Congress, and he was honoured by that body with one of the first naval commissions.

In February 1776, he was appointed to the command of the brig *Lexington*, of sixteen guns. She was the first continental vessel of war that sailed from the port of Philadelphia. Having cruised successfully in her, he was, in the latter part of the same year, transferred to the *Effingham*, one of three large frigates built in Philadelphia. In the eventful winter of that year, the navigation of the Delaware being impeded by ice, and all naval employment suspended, his bold and restless spirit could not be inactive. So zealous was he in his country's cause, that he



volunteered his services in the army, and served with distinguished reputation as aid-de-camp to General Cadwallader, in the important operations which took place in the vicinity of Trenton.

When the British obtained command of the city, and forts on the river, in 1777, it was deemed prudent to send the vessels of war up the river to Whitehill, where they might possibly escape destruction, Commodore Barry, with several others, effected their escape with great dexterity. The vessels, however, were soon after destroyed by the enemy. While the frigates were lying near Whitehill, Commodore Barry formed a project, which, for boldness of design, and dexterity of execution was not surpassed, if equalled, during the war. It struck him that the enemy might be severely annoyed by means of small boats, properly armed, which, being stationed down the river and bay, might intercept supplies going to the enemy, and, in case of danger, take refuge in the creeks. He accordingly manned the boats of the frigates, and, under cover of night, with muffled oars, descended the river. He arrived opposite the city before the enemy or citizens had any information of their movement. In a moment all was consternation and alarm; the enemy apprehending some impending disaster, while the citizens, supposing the project impracticable, despaired of the safety of his friends. The object was effected; and the success which crowned the adventure was worthy of the enterprising spirit which conceived it. They not only succeeded in intercepting supplies of provisions from the surrounding country, but captured several vessels loaded with military munitions and valuable stores for the British officers. General



Washington always spoke with great satisfaction of this enterprise, and those concerned in it ; indeed, he gave a public expression of thanks, to the Commodore and his officers.

After the destruction of his frigate, he was appointed to the command of the *Raleigh*, of thirty-two guns ; which ship he was obliged, by a large squadron of British vessels of war, to run on shore, on Fon's island, in Penobscot bay. Having made several voyages to the West Indies, in letter of marque vessels, during one of which he was commodore of a large squadron of them, he was afterwards ordered to take command of a seventy-four gun ship, building in New Hampshire. Congress having, however, concluded to present her to the King of France, the Commodore was appointed to the command of the frigate *Alliance*, of thirty-six guns, then at Boston. In February 1781, she sailed from Boston for L'Orient, having on board Colonel Laurens and suite, on an important embassy to the French court. He sailed from L'Orient early in 1781, on a cruise ; and having taken many valuable prizes, on the 29th of May an event occurred that deserves notice. On the preceding day two sail were discovered on the weather bow, standing for the *Alliance* ; after approaching near enough to be in sight, during the night, they hauled to the wind, and stood on the same course with the frigate.

At daylight, on the 29th, it became quite calm ; at sunrise the American colours were displayed on board the *Alliance* ; the drum beat to quarters. The strange sails were discovered to be a ship and a brig ; the British flag was displayed, and having, by means of their sweeps, got within hailing distance, they respec-



tively hailed, when it appeared that the ship was His Britannic Majesty's ship of war *Atalanta*, Captain Edwards, carrying between twenty and thirty guns; and her consort, the brig *Trepasa*, Captain Smith. The Commodore ordered them to haul down their colours, which being refused, the cannonading immediately began: the *Alliance*, from want of wind, was like a log upon the water; while the enemy by means of their sweeps, could select their position: they accordingly kept on the quarters, and athwart the stern of the *Alliance*, so that but few guns could be brought to bear upon them. About two o'clock, the Commodore was wounded in the left shoulder by a grape shot. Though the wound was dangerous and excessively painful, he remained on the quarter-deck some time, when the loss of blood obliged him to be carried to the cockpit. Shortly after, the colours of the *Alliance* were shot away, and, this happening in the interval of loading her guns, the enemy concluded they had been struck; they manned the shrouds and huzzaed. The American flag was soon hoisted again, and the renewal of the fire from the *Alliance* sent the enemy to their quarters. A little wind fortunately springing up, the broadside of the frigate was brought to bear upon the enemy; it did great execution, and at three, P. M., they both struck their colours. When Captain Edwards was conducted to the Commodore, who was then confined in the cabin, he presented his sword, which was immediately returned to him, as a testimonial of the high opinion entertained of his bravery; the Commodore observing, at the same time, "that he richly merited it, and that his King ought to give him a better ship."









Alliance and Atlantic.



Soon after the Commodore was wounded and left the deck, one of his lieutenants went to him while in the cockpit, and representing the shattered state of the sails and rigging, the number of killed and wounded, and the disadvantages under which they laboured, from the want of wind, desired to know if the colours should be struck. "No," said he; "and if the ship can't be fought without, I will be carried on deck." When the lieutenant made known to the crew the determination of their brave commander, fresh spirit was infused into them, and they one and all resolved to "stick by him." As soon as his wound was dressed, he insisted on being carried on deck, but before he reached it the enemy had struck. The Alliance had eleven killed, and twenty-one wounded; among the latter several of her officers; her rigging and spars much shattered, and she was severely damaged in her hull; the enemy had the same number killed, and thirty wounded. We have been led into the detail of this victory, as it was considered, at the time of its achievement, a most brilliant exploit; and an unequivocal evidence of the unconquerable firmness and intrepidity of the victor.

In the fall of 1781, orders were received to fit the Alliance for taking the Marquis de Lafayette and Count de Noailles to France, on public business. On the 25th of December, she sailed from Boston, with them on board.

The Alliance left L'Orient in February 1782, from which time she continued cruising, with great success, till March of the following year; when, shortly after leaving Havana, whither she had been ordered, to bring the United States a large quantity



of specie, having in company the continental ship Luzerne, of twenty guns, Captain Green, three frigates were discovered right ahead, two leagues distant; the American vessels were hove about; the enemy gave chase. The Luzerne not sailing as fast as the Alliance, the Commodore ordered her captain to throw her guns overboard. A sail was then discovered on her weather-bow bearing down upon them; the Alliance hove out a signal, which was answered; she proved to be a French ship, of fifty guns. Relying upon her assistance, the Commodore concluded to bring the headmost of the enemy's ships to action; after inspiring his crew by an address, and going from gun to gun, and cautioning his men against too much haste, and not to fire until ordered, he prepared for action. The enemy's ship was of equal size with the Alliance; a severe engagement followed: it was very soon perceptible that the Alliance was gaining the advantage; most of the enemy's guns were silenced; and, after an action of fifty minutes, the ship was so severely damaged, that she hoisted a signal of distress, when her consorts joined her. The loss on board the Alliance was very trifling—three killed, and eleven wounded. The enemy's loss was severe; thirty-seven killed, and fifty wounded. The other English frigates were watching the movements of the French ships; the captain of which, upon coming up with the Alliance, assigned as a reason for keeping aloof from the action, that he was apprehensive the Alliance had been taken, and that the engagement was only a decoy. Chase was made, but the French ship being unable to keep up with the American, it was given over.

A gentleman of distinguished naval reputation,



when in the Mediterranean with the American squadron, was introduced to Captain James Vaughan, now Vice-Admiral of the Red, the commander of the British frigate engaged with the Alliance. In the course of conversation, he made particular inquiry after Captain Barry; related the circumstances of the action; and, with the frankness of a generous enemy, confessed that he had never seen a ship so ably fought as the Alliance; that he had never before, to use his own words,—“received such a drubbing, and that he was indebted to the assistance of his consorts.” We are sensible we have indulged in greater particularity in the relation of these engagements than most readers would think necessary. Our reason must apologise for us; we wish it to be known that the gallantry of our seamen is not of recent date, but is coeval with our national existence.

These are the most interesting incidents that our imperfect materials furnish. Suffice it to say, that Commodore Barry served throughout the Revolution with distinguished honour to himself, and signal benefit to his country. Even during the intervals of suspension from public employment, occasioned by the chances of war, he was actively and efficiently employed in annoying the commerce of the enemy in letter of marque vessels. Having espoused the cause of liberty from principle, he was attached to it with all the glow of patriotic enthusiasm; nothing could divert him from it, nor cool his ardour. The following anecdote may be relied upon as authentic; it evinces at once the high estimation in which his services were held by the enemy, and the constancy of his resolution:—



General Howe, appreciating the Commodore's character, and thinking him important to the successful progress and issue of the contest, made an attempt to detach him from his country's service; for this purpose, he authorised an offer to the Commodore of fifteen or twenty thousand guineas, and the command of the best frigate in the English navy. The General availed himself of a period that seemed to him the most auspicious for the accomplishment of his object; it was when the metropolis was in possession of the British—when the enemy triumphed, and even when the best friends of America began to despair. The offer was rejected with the indignation of insulted patriotism. The answer he returned to the General was, that "he had devoted himself to the cause of his country, and not the value and command of the whole British fleet could seduce him from it."

After the termination of hostilities, the Commodore was retained in the public service; and when, under Mr. Adams's administration, it was deemed expedient to increase the naval establishment, he was appointed to superintend the building of the frigate *United States*, in Philadelphia, which was designed for his command. His opinion was very influential in the adoption by the government of that excellent model for ships of war, the superiority of which, over every other, has been so strikingly proved, as to have extorted the acknowledgments even of our enemies. During the partial maritime war into which we were drawn by the aggressions of the cruisers of the French Republic, Commodore Barry was constantly and actively employed; and though fortune did not afford him an opportunity of signalising himself by any



splendid victory, yet he rendered essential service to the commercial interests of the country, by protecting its flag from the depredations of the French privateers, which infested the ocean. After our differences with France were accommodated, he retained the command of the *United States* until she was laid up in ordinary, soon after the introduction of Mr. Jefferson to the Executive chair.

Commodore Barry did not long survive the termination of his public services; though naturally of a strong and robust constitution, he had been for many years subject to an asthmatic affection, to which he fell a victim, at Philadelphia, on the thirteenth day of September, 1803.

Thus closed the life of one of the first of patriots, and best of men. He was eminently qualified for the important stations which he filled. He possessed courage without rashness—a constancy of spirit which could not be subdued—a sound and intuitive judgment—a promptitude of decision equal to the most trying emergencies—a consummate skill—a generosity of soul which tempered the sterner qualities of the head, and recommended him to the esteem of all—a humanity of feeling which made him no less attentive to the comforts and happiness of those whom the fortune of war threw into his power than he had been ambitious to conquer them. He spent a long life upon the ocean, and was engaged in every variety of service. He knew how to conciliate those who were subjected to his command, and, although a rigid disciplinarian, he never failed to secure the attachment of his sailors. It is worthy of especial remark, that no one who has sailed with him as a seaman has



ever been heard to speak of him but with affection and gratitude. He never found any difficulty in making up a crew, and desertion from his ship was unknown.

In the various relations of private life he was no less unexceptionable. As a citizen he was exemplary—as a friend sincere,—as a husband tender and affectionate. The affability and frankness of his deportment, ingratiated him with all who enjoyed the pleasure of his acquaintance; there was a native humour in his character which gave it peculiar interest. His mansion was ever the residence of hospitality. Jealous of his own honour he was never known to injure, designedly, the feelings of any one; and, though possessed of a quickness of sensibility to the appearance of offence or impropriety, he never failed to express his regret, and to make atonement for injuries prompted by an excess of feeling. He was just, charitable, and without disguise. As he was educated in the habits of religion, so he cultivated them through life; he enforced a strict observance of divine worship on board his ship, and scrupulously attended to the moral deportment of his crew; he had himself experienced the comforts of religion, and he died in its faith.

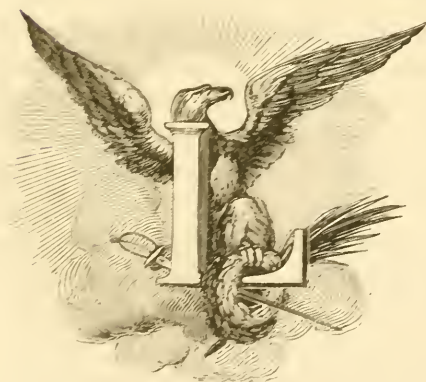
Commodore Barry was in size above the ordinary stature; his person was graceful and commanding. His whole deportment was marked by dignity unmingled with ostentation; and his strongly marked countenance was expressive at once of the qualities of his mind, and the virtues of his heart.\*

\* Port Folio.





NICHOLAS BIDDLE.



LIBERTY never had a more intrepid defender than the subject of this memoir. Among the brave men who perished in the glorious struggle for the independence of America, CAPTAIN NICHOLAS

BIDDLE holds a distinguished rank. His services, and the high expectations raised by his military genius

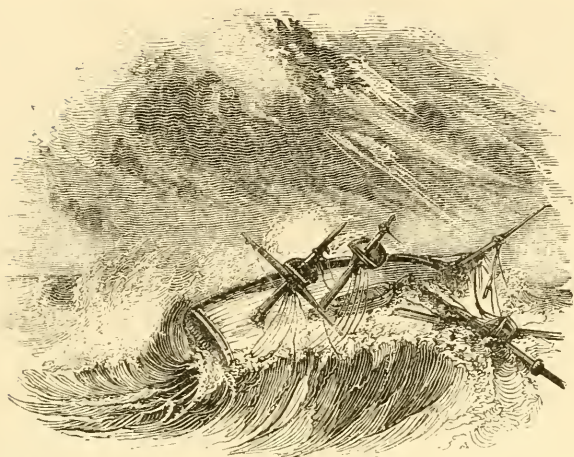


and gallantry, have left a strong impression of his merit, and a profound regret that his early fate should have disappointed so soon the hopes of his country.

Nicholas Biddle was born in the city of Philadelphia, on the tenth day of September, 1750. His father, Mr. William Biddle, was a native of New Jersey, son of William Biddle, one of the first settlers and proprietors of that State, from whom he inherited a very large fortune, which his losses in trade, and the engagements of suretyship for a friend had greatly reduced. His mother was the daughter of Nicholas Scull, Esq., who was, for many years, Surveyor-General of Pennsylvania; and of these worthy and respectable parents he was the sixth son.

Mr. Biddle, very early in life, manifested his partiality for the sea, and before the age of fourteen he had made a voyage to Quebec. In the following year, 1765, he sailed from Philadelphia to Jamaica, and the bay of Honduras. The vessel left the bay in the latter end of December 1765, bound to Antigua, and the second day of January, in a heavy gale of wind, she was cast away on a shoal, called the Northern Triangles. After remaining two nights and a day upon the wreck, the crew took to their yawl, the long-boat having been lost, and with great difficulty and hazard landed on one of the small uninhabited islands, about three leagues distant from the reef, upon which they struck. Here they staid a few days. Some provisions were procured from the wreck, and their boat was refitted. As it was too small to carry them all off, they drew lots to determine who should remain, and young Biddle was among the number. He, and his three companions,





Mr. Bidule shipwrecked on the Northern Triangles.

suffered extreme hardships, for want of provisions and good water, and although various efforts were made for their relief, it was nearly two months before they succeeded.

Such a scene of dangers and sufferings, in the commencement of his career, would have discouraged a youth of ordinary enterprise and perseverance. On him it produced no such effect. The coolness and promptitude with which he acted, in the midst of perils that alarmed the oldest seamen, gave a sure presage of the force of his character, and after he had returned home, he made several European voyages, in which he acquired a thorough knowledge of seamanship.

In the year 1770, when a war between Great Britain and Spain was expected, in consequence of the dispute relative to Falkland's Island, he went to London, in order to enter into the British navy. He took with



him letters of recommendation from Thomas Willing, Esq., to his brother-in-law, Captain Sterling, on board of whose ship he served for some time as a midshipman. The dispute with Spain being accommodated, he intended to leave the navy, but was persuaded by Captain Sterling to remain in the service, promising that he would use all his interest to get him promoted. His ardent mind, however, could not rest satisfied with the inactivity of his situation, which he was impatient to change for one more suited to his disposition.

In the year 1773, a voyage of discovery was undertaken, at the request of the Royal Society, in order to ascertain how far navigation was practicable towards the North Pole, to advance the discovery of a northwest passage into the South seas, and to make such astronomical observations as might prove serviceable to navigation.

Two vessels, the *Race Horse* and *Carcase*, were fitted out for the expedition, the command of which was given to the Hon. Captain Phipps, afterwards Lord Mulgrave. The peculiar dangers to which such an undertaking was exposed, induced the government to take extraordinary precautions in fitting out, and preparing the vessels, and selecting the crews; and a positive order was issued that no boys should be received on board.

To the bold and enterprising spirit of young Biddle such an expedition had great attractions. Extremely anxious to join it, he endeavoured to procure Captain Sterling's permission for that purpose, but he was unwilling to part with him, and would not consent to let him go. The temptation was, however, irresis-



tible. He resolved to go, and laying aside his uniform he entered on board the *Carcase* before the mast. When he first went on board, he was observed by a seaman who had known him before and was very much attached to him. The honest fellow thinking that he must have been degraded and turned before the mast in disgrace was greatly affected at seeing him; but he was equally surprised and pleased when he learned the true cause of the young officer's disguise, and he kept his secret as he was requested to do. Impelled by the same spirit, young Horatio, afterwards Lord Nelson, had solicited and obtained permission to enter on board the same vessel. These youthful adventurers are both said to have been appointed coxswains, a station always assigned to the most active and trusty seamen. The particulars of this expedition are well known to the public. These intrepid navigators penetrated as far as the latitude of eighty-one degrees and thirty-nine minutes, and they were at one time enclosed with mountains of ice, and their vessels rendered almost immovable for five days, at the hazard of instant destruction. Captain Biddle kept a journal of his voyage, which was afterwards lost with him.

The commencement of the revolution gave a new turn to his pursuits, and he repaired, without delay, to the standard of his country. When a rupture between England and America appeared inevitable, he returned to Philadelphia, and soon after his arrival, he was appointed to the command of the *Camden* galley, fitted for the defence of the Delaware. He found this too inactive a service, and when the fleet



was preparing, under Commodore Hopkins, for an expedition against New Providence, he applied for a command in the fleet, and was immediately appointed commander of the *Andrew Doria*, a brig of fourteen guns and a hundred and thirty men. Paul Jones, who was then a lieutenant, and was going on the expedition, was distinguished by Captain Biddle, and introduced to his friends as an officer of merit.

Writing from the Capes to his brother, the late Judge Biddle, he says, "I know not what may be our fate; be it, however, what it may, you may rest assured I will never cause a blush in the cheeks of my friends or countrymen." Soon after they sailed, the small-pox broke out and raged with great violence in the fleet, which was manned chiefly by New England seamen. The humanity of Captain Biddle, always prompt and active, was employed on this occasion, to alleviate the general distress, by all the means in his power. His own crew, which was from Philadelphia, being secure against the distemper, he took on board great numbers of the sick from the other vessels. Every part of his vessel was crowded, the long-boat was fitted for their accommodation, and he gave up his own cot to a young midshipman on whom he bestowed the greatest attention till his death. In the meanwhile he slept himself upon the lockers, refusing the repeated solicitations of his officers to accept their births. On their arrival at New Providence, it surrendered without opposition. The crew of the *Andrew Doria*, from their crowded situation became sick, and before she left Providence, there were not men enough capable of doing duty to man the



boats; Captain Biddle visited them every day, and ordered every necessary refreshment, but they continued sickly until they arrived at New London.

After refitting at New London, Captain Biddle received orders to proceed off the Banks of New foundland, in order to intercept the transports and storeships bound to Boston. Before he reached the Banks, he captured two ships from Scotland, with four hundred Highland troops on board, destined for Boston. At this time the *Andrew Doria* had not one hundred men. Lieutenant Josiah, a brave and excellent officer, was put on board one of the prizes, with all the Highland officers, and ordered to make the first port. Unfortunately, about ten days afterwards, he was taken by the *Cerberus* frigate, and on pretence of his being an Englishman, he was ordered to do duty, and extremely ill used. Captain Biddle hearing of the ill-treatment of Lieutenant Josiah, wrote to the Admiral at New York, that however disagreeable it was to him, he would treat a young man of family, believed to be a son of Lord Cranston, who was then his prisoner, in the same manner they treated Lieutenant Josiah.

He also applied to his own government in behalf of this injured officer, and by the proceedings of Congress, on the 7th of August, 1776, it appears, "That a letter from Captain Nicholas Biddle to the Marine Committee, was laid before Congress and read; Whereupon, *Resolved*, That General Washington be directed to propose an exchange of Lieutenant Josiah for a lieutenant of the navy of Great Britain: That the General remonstrate to Lord Howe on the cruel treatment Lieutenant Josiah has met with, of which



the Congress have received undoubted information." Lieutenant Josiah was exchanged after an imprisonment of ten months. After the capture of the ships with the Highlanders, such was Captain Biddle's activity and success in taking prizes, that when he arrived in the Delaware he had but five of the crew with which he sailed from New London, the rest having been distributed among the captured vessels, and their places supplied by men who had entered from the prizes. He had a great number of prisoners, so that for some days before he got in he never left the deck.

While he was thus indefatigably engaged in weakening the enemy's power, and advancing his country's interest, he was disinterested and generous in all that related to his private advantage. The brave and worthy opponent whom the chance of war had thrown in his power, found in him a patron and friend, who on more than one occasion was known to restore to the vanquished the fruits of victory.

In the latter end of the year 1776, Captain Biddle was appointed to the command of the Randolph, a frigate of thirty-two guns. With his usual activity he employed every exertion to get her ready for sea. The difficulty of procuring American seamen at that time obliged him, in order to man his ship, to take a number of British seamen, who were prisoners of war, and who had requested leave to enter.

The Randolph sailed from Philadelphia in February 1777. Soon after she got to sea her lower masts were discovered to be unsound, and, in a heavy gale of wind, all her masts went by the board. While they were bearing away for Charleston, the English



sailors, with some others of the crew, formed the design to take the ship. When all was ready they gave three cheers on the gun-deck. By the decided and resolute conduct of Captain Biddle and his officers, the ringleaders were seized and punished, and the rest submitted without further resistance. After refitting at Charleston, as speedily as possible, he sailed on a cruise, and three days after he left the Bar, he fell in with four sail of vessels, bound from Jamaica to London. One of them—called the *True Briton*—mounted twenty guns. The commander of her, who had frequently expressed to his passengers his hopes of falling in with the *Randolph*, as soon as he perceived her, made all the sail he could from her, but finding he could not escape, he hove to, and kept up a constant fire, until the *Randolph* had borne down upon him, and was preparing for a broadside, when he hauled down his colours. By her superior sailing, the *Randolph* was enabled to capture the rest of the vessels, and in one week from the time he sailed from Charleston, Captain Biddle returned there with his prizes, which proved to be very valuable.

Encouraged by his spirit and success, the State of South Carolina made exertions for fitting out an expedition under his command. His name and the personal attachment to him urged forward a crowd of volunteers to serve with him, and, in a short time, the ship *General Moultrie*, the brigs *Fair American*, and *Polly*, and the *Notre Dame* were prepared for sea. A detachment of fifty men from the first regiment of South Carolina Continental infantry was ordered to act as marines on board the *Randolph*. The regiment was then commanded by Colonel, afterwards General



Charles Cotesworth Pinckney, who, with his officers and soldiers, would have done honour to any service. Such, says our informant—himself a gallant officer of that regiment,—was the attachment which the honourable and amiable deportment of Captain Biddle had impressed during his stay at Charleston, and such the confidence inspired by his professional conduct and valour, that a general emulation pervaded the corps to have the honour of serving under his command. The tour of duty, after a generous competition among the officers, was decided to Captain Joor, and lieutenants Grey and Simmons, whose gallant conduct, and that of their brave detachment, did justice to the high character of the regiment. As soon as the Randolph was refitted, and a new mainmast obtained in place of one which had been struck with lightning,\* she dropped down to Rebellion Roads with her little squadron. Their intention was to attack the Carysfort frigate, the *Perseus*, twenty-four gun ship, the *Hinchinbrook*, of sixteen guns, and a privateer which had been cruising off the Bar, and had much annoyed the trade. They were detained a considerable time in Rebellion Roads, after they were ready to sail, by contrary winds and want of water on the Bar for the Randolph. As soon as they got over the Bar, they stood to the eastward, in expectation of falling in with the British cruisers. The next day they retook a dismasted ship from New England; as she had no cargo on board they took out her crew, six light guns and some stores, and set her on fire. Finding that the British ships had left the coast, they proceeded to

\* After this accident, he used a conductor, the novelty of which, at that time, excited much attention.



the West Indies, and cruised to the eastward, and nearly in the latitude of Barbadoes for some days, during which time they boarded a number of French and Dutch ships, and took an English schooner from New York bound to Grenada, which had mistaken the Randolph for a British frigate, and was taken possession of before the mistake was discovered.

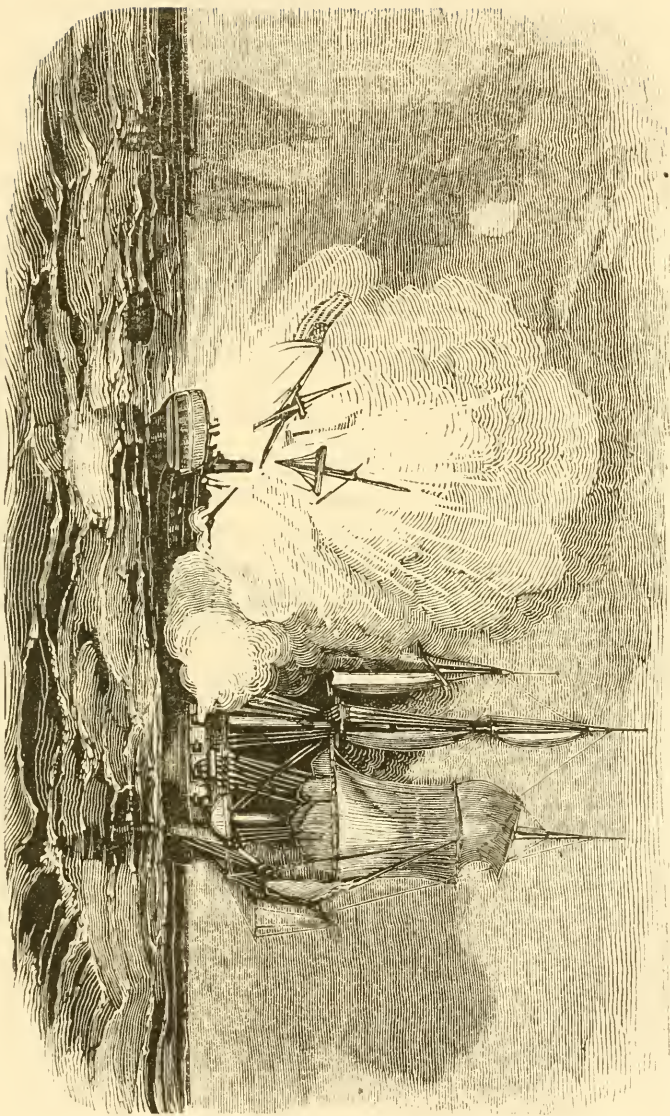
On the night of the 7th of March, 1778, the fatal accident occurred, which terminated the life of this excellent officer. For some days previously, he had expected an attack. Captain Blake, a brave officer, who commanded a detachment of the second South Carolina regiment, serving as marines on board the General Moultrie, and to whom we are indebted for several of the ensuing particulars, dined on board the Randolph two days before the engagement. At dinner, Captain Biddle said, "We have been cruising here for some time, and have spoken a number of vessels, who will, no doubt, give information of us, and I should not be surprised if my old ship should be out after us. As to any thing that carries her guns upon one deck, I think myself a match for her." About three, P. M., of the 7th of March, a signal was made from the Randolph for a sail to windward, in consequence of which the squadron hauled upon a wind, in order to speak her. It was four o'clock, before she could be distinctly seen, when she was discovered to be a ship, though as she neared and came before the wind, she had the appearance of a large sloop with only a square-sail set. About seven o'clock, the Randolph being to windward hove to, the Moultrie being about one hundred and fifty yards astern, and



rather to leeward, also hove to. About eight o'clock, the British ship fired a shot just ahead of the Moultrie, and hailed her, the answer was the Polly of New York, upon which she immediately hauled her wind, and hailed the Randolph. She was then for the first time discovered to be a two-decker. After several questions asked and answered, as she was ranging up alongside the Randolph, and had got on her weather quarter, Lieutenant Barnes, of that ship, called out, "This is the Randolph," and she immediately hoisted her colours and gave the enemy a broadside. Shortly after the action commenced, Captain Biddle received a wound in the thigh and fell. This occasioned some confusion, as it was at first thought that he was killed. He soon, however, ordered a chair to be brought, said that he was only slightly wounded, and being carried forward encouraged the crew. The stern of the enemy's ship being clear of the Randolph, the captain of the Moultrie gave orders to fire, but the enemy having shot ahead, so as to bring the Randolph between them, the last broadside of the Moultrie went into the Randolph, and it was thought by one of the men saved who was stationed on the quarter-deck near Captain Biddle, that he was wounded by shot from the Moultrie. The fire from the Randolph was constant and well-directed. She fired nearly three broadsides to the enemy's one, and she appeared, while the battle lasted, to be in a continual blaze. In about twenty minutes after the action began, and while the surgeon was examining Captain Biddle's wound on the quarter-deck, the Randolph blew up.



Action between the Randolph and Yarmouth.









The enemy's vessel was the British ship Yarmouth, of sixty-four guns, commanded by Captain Vincent. So closely were they engaged, that Captain Morgan, of the Fair American, and all his crew, thought that it was the enemy's ship that had blown up. He stood for the Yarmouth, and had a trumpet in his hand to hail and inquire how Captain Biddle was, when he discovered his mistake. Owing to the disabled condition of the Yarmouth the other vessels escaped.

The cause of the explosion was never ascertained ; but it is remarkable that just before he sailed, after the clerk had copied the signals and orders for the armed vessels that accompanied him, he wrote at the foot of them, "in case of coming to action in the night, be very careful of your magazines." The number of persons on board the Randolph was three hundred and fifteen, who all perished, except four men, who were tossed about for four days on a piece of the wreck before they were discovered and taken up. From the information of two of these men, who were afterwards in Philadelphia, and of some individuals in the other vessels of the squadron, we have been enabled to state some particulars of this unfortunate event in addition to the accounts given of it by Dr. Ramsay in his History of the American Revolution, and in his history of the revolution of South Carolina. In the former work, the historian thus concludes his account of the action : "Captain Biddle, who perished on board the Randolph, was universally lamented. He was in the prime of life, and had excited high expectations of future usefulness to his country, as a bold and skilful naval officer."



Thus prematurely fell at the age of twenty-seven, as gallant an officer as any country ever boasted of. In the short career which Providence allowed to him, he displayed all those qualities which constitute a great soldier. Brave to excess, and consummately skilled in his profession, no danger nor unexpected event could shake his firmness, or disturb his presence of mind. An exact and rigid disciplinarian, he tempered his authority with so much humanity and affability, that his orders were always executed with cheerfulness and alacrity. Perhaps no officer ever understood better the art of commanding the affections as well as the respect of those who served under him: if that can be called an art which was rather the natural effect of the benevolence and magnanimity of his character.

The virtues of his private life endeared him to a numerous circle of friends. With the frankness and manliness of character, which eminently belong to the officers of his profession, Captain Biddle united other qualities of much more rare occurrence. The most amiable mildness and modesty of manners, a strict and rigid temperance, and a strong habitual sense of his religious and moral duties. A sincere Christian, his religious impressions had a decided and powerful influence upon his conduct. Even his native courage was heightened by the reflection, that in the discharge of his duty all personal consequences were to be disregarded. His temper was uniformly cheerful, and his conversation sprightly and entertaining. In his person he was about five feet nine inches high, remarkably handsome, strong and active.



Before he left Charleston, he was engaged to be married, on his return, to a young lady of that place.

By the numerous living witnesses of his worth, and extraordinary promise, his memory is cherished with peculiar fondness, and it will ever be respected by the brave and the patriotic.\*

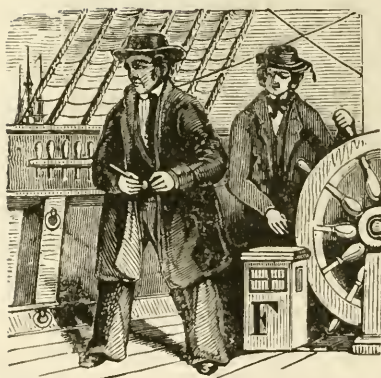
\* Port Folio.







JOSHUA BARNEY.



EW among the naval heroes of our country, have gone through more varieties of active service, or experienced greater vicissitudes of fortune, than the subject of this memoir. His life has been written in a most entertaining style, by his relative, Mrs. Mary Barney; and it is from this source that we have drawn the principal facts contained in the following sketch.



COMMODORE JOSHUA BARNEY was born at Baltimore, on the sixth of July, 1759. His ancestors had emigrated from England, where they maintained a middling rank, and were of reputable character. Education, in those days, was only to be obtained at considerable expense, and that but rarely in a new country which had but few inhabitants; and some of these without fortune or learning. He went to school very young, and having attained the principles of arithmetic, reading and writing, he left, at ten years of age. Even at this early period he had acquired a decided liking for the sea, which the parents endeavoured to divert to some other object, by putting him to various employments, without success. Finding that these trials tended but to increase his ardent desire for the sea, they resolved—however, unwillingly—to let him try his fortune in the profession of his choice. When they placed him with a pilot, they still entertained hopes that a few months' service would make him lose his predilection for this toilsome pursuit, and return to the domestic circle. But the waste of waters was to him a home, however dreary; and the result of every subsequent excursion pronounced more clearly that he was destined to lead the life of a sailor. The fond parents, seeing this, thought fit to provide permanently for his advancement, until he should be able to control his own movements: an opportunity soon offered. Captain Thomas Drysdale, (his brother-in-law,) was then in port, with a small brig, and offered to receive him on board—a favour which the family accepted, and young Barney forthwith entered upon his new engagement. The first voyage was to Liverpool; when, after the delivery of



the cargo, the brig was unexpectedly sold, and the master secured a passage for himself and Barney, for Baltimore. Although our hero had loved the sea so well, yet he longed for a sight of home and his relations. When he arrived, he received the unwelcome intelligence that his father had been called to his last home, and found the family plunged in the deepest affliction.

After visiting the scenes of his boyhood, he again resumed his former vocation, and made several voyages to Europe, in company with his brother-in-law. On the 22d of December, 1774, he entered upon a voyage which, though it terminated the life of Captain Drysdale, shows, most conclusively, the energy and resources of Barney's mind. The Captain died in a week after they had set sail, and the first mate having left the ship in consequence of a quarrel, it became necessary for young Barney to command and conduct the ship to her destination, Nice; an undertaking of no small difficulty, considering the leaky state of the vessel, the inexperience of her commander, and the distance of the port; yet he cheerfully undertook it. As they proceeded on their voyage the leak gained upon them, notwithstanding they kept the pumps going day and night, and, on entering the Mediterranean, they were overtaken by a storm which threatened to complete their ruin; they were able, however, to put into Gibraltar, and Barney, taking all responsibility upon himself, had the ship repaired; an operation which occupied three months, and they then set sail for their destination, where they arrived in safety. Here, again, his mental energies were taxed to the utmost, for the Nicene



merchants determined not to pay the expenses of repairs at Gibraltar, and the Governor seconding them, young Barney was thrown into prison; but he was soon afterwards released. As all American vessels then sailed under English colours, he hoisted the union jack, considering, that if they attempted to take the vessel, it would be considered a national insult, and as such would be resented. In this he was right.

The cost of repairs being paid, he set sail for America; but, on the way, he touched at Alicant, in Spain, and, as his Catholic Majesty was then fitting out his memorable expedition against Algiers, he was detained, and employed in the service of the expedition. It would not be in place, here to give a description of that unfortunate and disgraceful expedition; which resulted in the utter discomfiture of the Spaniards. After this he returned to America, where he was first informed of the *rebellion* of the colonies, and that the battles of Lexington and Bunker's Hill had been already fought. He was but sixteen years old when he returned from this eventful voyage, and, considering the struggle of the colonies a just one, he determined to enter into their service. The country was in a state of great excitement, and young Barney allowed himself little or no relaxation; but learning that there were two vessels equipping at Baltimore, he immediately offered his services, and was received as master's mate, on board of the sloop of war *Hornet*, of ten guns, which was destined to join the squadron of Commodore Hopkins.

Towards the latter end of November 1775, the *Hornet*, in company with another Baltimore vessel—the *Wasp*—set sail, and cleared the capes, without being



seen by the British cruisers, and found the squadron of Commodore Hopkins, consisting of five ships, mounting one hundred and two guns, and the Fly tender, anchored at the mouth of the Delaware. The fleet immediately set sail, and without any adventure arrived at the place of rendezvous, where their destination was made known. New Providence, one of the Bahamas, was the object of attack, and thither they steered; but, on the passage, during a stormy night, the Hornet lost her masthead and boom, in consequence of the Fly tender running foul of her, and she became separated from the rest of the fleet. This untoward accident compelled the captain to steer for the nearest port and repair. They arrived off the mouth of the Delaware about the first of April, where they were informed that the British ship Roebuck, of forty-four guns, lay at anchor in the roads, and that her tender was cruising in quest of prizes. The captain, affected to be under the influence of religious scruples, determined to avoid her, but in so doing, fell upon her track and soon encountered her, and the captain was about to surrender, but the tender, seeing, as she neared, the force of the sloop, sheered off. The sloop in going up the channel ran ashore, but was got off with the loss of her rudder, and after a cold, tempestuous run, arrived at Philadelphia.

Barney now left the Hornet, and volunteered his services to Captain Charles Alexander, a Scotchman, who had entered the American service, and held the command of the Wasp. The Wasp having convoyed a vessel richly laden, clear of the coast, returned to the Delaware, where her commander discovered, lying in the roads, the Roebuck, forty-four, and the Liverpool,



twenty-eight—two British frigates which had entered the river in her absence. The Wasp was pursued by the latter; but the British ship, having no pilot, ran ashore, and the little schooner escaped to the Cape May channel, where she found two other American vessels—the Lexington, and the Surprise—lying securely at anchor, their commanders, Captains Barry and Weeks, being ignorant of the near vicinity of the enemy. In the meantime the Liverpool got off, and commenced the chase of a vessel laden with ammunition. The three American commanders observing this, made preparations to give the enemy a warm reception. But the Roebuck appearing in sight disconcerted their plans, and made them seek safety in flight. The captain of the chased vessel, seeing no hope of escape, ran her ashore, and commenced taking out her cargo, in which they were assisted by boats' crews from the Lexington and Surprise, until the frigates lowered their boats, when Captain Barry ordered a quantity of loose powder and a slow match to be placed in the hold, and, as the enemy entered, it went off with a tremendous explosion, killing every soul on board. The Wasp now pursued her course up the bay, which was perceived by the frigates, who gave chase. Captain Alexander, finding that they gained upon him, hauled his course to the wind, and ran into Wilmington creek, when night coming on, the frigates dropped anchor at the mouth of the creek, and thus kept him in a state of blockade. A number of row galleys from Philadelphia, under the command of Commodore Hazlewood, having been sent after the frigates, made their appearance the next morning, and instantly commenced an attack. Captain Alex-



ander, embracing this opportunity, attacked the tender of one of the British frigates, carried her by boarding, and made his escape, pursued by the Roebuck, which grounded on the Jersey shore. Captain Alexander, sent his prize to port, and re-entered the creek before night. The next morning being thick and hazy, he got out; but, when the weather cleared, he found himself almost in the enemy's power, but by exertion he escaped, and again meeting the galleys, they maintained the attack all day, and finally through the exertions of Barney forced the frigates to retire, while the Wasp returned safe to Philadelphia.

Barney was not yet seventeen, and through the kindness of Captain Alexander, he was appointed to take charge of the sloop *Sachem*, of ten guns, and superintend her equipment. While on this service, he received an appointment as lieutenant, on the 20th of June, 1776. Soon after this, Captain Isaiah Robinson arrived, and took the command of the *Sachem*, and, with our young hero, set sail on the 6th of July. Before they had been at sea many days they fell in with a letter of marque brig, under English colours, and an attack was determined upon, which lasted about two hours, when the brig surrendered, and was taken into Philadelphia.

In consequence of the ability and bravery displayed by Captain Robinson and Lieutenant Barney, they were removed to the *Andrew Doria*, of fourteen guns, which was waiting for orders to put to sea. Captain Robinson was ordered to St. Eustatia, for the purpose of bringing home some ammunition, deposited there, at the disposal of Congress,—and to return home immediately, in order not to subject himself to



being taken by a superior force. On their return home they fell in with the Race Horse, of twelve guns, under Lieutenant Jones, and after a hard-fought battle of two hours, forced her to surrender. The vessel suffered much in the hull, spars and rigging, and Lieutenant Jones and most of his men were more or less dangerously wounded before he surrendered. The Andrew Doria had four killed, and eight or nine wounded.

Soon after this, having captured an English scow, Lieutenant Barney was sent in her as prizemaster; but on the voyage home, he encountered a severe gale, and was compelled to put into Chincoteague for repairs. After remaining there till January 2d, 1777, he proceeded to sea with the prize; but on his passage he was captured by the Perseus, of twenty guns, and taken to Charleston. Being allowed to retire upon parole, Barney soon found his way to Philadelphia. Here he remained many months, until an exchange offered, when he again returned to the Andrew Doria. He was heartily welcomed by Captain Robinson, and his brother officers and men.

The Andrew Doria now formed a part of the force, that had been prepared for the water defence of Philadelphia, which force consisted of a flotilla of about forty ships and boats, commanded by Commodore Hazlewood. They were stationed off the mouth of the Schuylkill, partly defended by a small fort, erected on Mud island. A portion of the American forces were also stationed at Red Bank, on the Jersey shore, and at Province island, farther down the river. These preparations were made not without some great design, for the enemy being now in possession



of Philadelphia, a determined effort was to be made before they could gain the command of the Delaware.

The attack which was made on the flotilla and forts by the British fleet, and ably sustained by the Americans, afforded many opportunities for the display of that heroism which marked every action of the revolutionary war, in which the naval force was concerned. By employing an overwhelming force, both by sea and land, the enemy were at length enabled to batter down the American forts and disperse the flotilla, and thus effect an open communication between the ocean and Philadelphia, now in their possession. This, however, was not effected without a heavy loss of officers and men. Among the former was the gallant Donop. The English also lost two ships, and the Americans one. The final attack terminated on the night of the 16th of November, by the Americans running their ships up the river to Bordentown, rather than let them fall into the hands of the enemy, who had thus learned that their victories were to be bought only by a force greatly superior to that of their opponents in numbers and discipline.

Lieutenant Barney, throughout the whole affair, displayed his usual bravery and perseverance. He was always in the thickest of the fray, and despised the old rules of warfare—that it is the mark of courage and insight, to bring your forces whole from battle, and be sure and return yourself with your ships.

Early in the following December, he was ordered to enter as lieutenant of the frigate *Virginia*, which was then lying at Baltimore, whither he was ordered with a detachment of seamen and officers destined for



the frigate. He was nearly a month in performing the march, in consequence of the almost impassable state of the roads, which were covered with snow and sleet. A great many of the men were frostbitten, in consequence of the cold ; but all arrived safe.

In 1778, he was placed in the command of a pilot-boat tender. His duty in this capacity was to cruise about the bay, and watch the movements of the enemy, and observe when an opportunity offered for the frigate to put to sea. In this capacity he recaptured a large sloop belonging to Baltimore, and one of the enemy's barges which had seized her.

On the last of March, an opportunity offered for the frigate to put to sea ; but she ran on the middle ground, and in this situation was attacked by three of the enemy's fleet, when the captain hoisted out the barge, and put to shore, leaving the vessel under the command of Lieutenant Barney, who was overruled in his determination to resist the enemy by the other officers, who were willing to follow the course of their captain. Lieutenant Barney thus again fell into the hands of the enemy ; but in consequence of his former humane conduct towards the British prisoners who had fallen into his hands, he was treated with kindness and civility, and such was the confidence reposed in him, that he was frequently allowed to go on shore and remain for whole days. Captain Caldwell, who commanded the *Emerald*—in which ship Lieutenant Barney was prisoner—had, by his uniform kindness and urbanity, won the esteem of all Americans who fell into his hands.

During the year 1778, it having been deemed necessary to send the prisoners to New York, Lieute-



nant Barney was removed to this place, in the ship *St. Albans*, sixty-four, Captain Onslow. On the passage, Lieutenant Barney, who was the only officer of any distinction on board, formed the bold plan of seizing the ship, and the whole fleet, but the project was disconcerted by the treachery of a Frenchman, to whom the secret had been confided. When Captain Onslow became aware of it, he placed the means which Lieutenant Barney was to employ, out of his reach, and passed the affair over in silence, until he arrived at New York, when it was only referred to as a matter of pleasantry. When they arrived at New York, the Americans were transferred to the prison-ships. Here, Barney, for the first time, realised that he was a prisoner. He now beheld disease, in her varied forms, revelling, as it were, in the mass of beings, who seemed scarcely "*human*."

Even here, his usual kindness predominated, and he tended for hours the sick and dying of his countrymen. He was not, however, without the hope of being relieved, and was allowed to obtain, at least, the freedom of the deck. In this he was not disappointed; for, in a few weeks after his incarceration, he was happy to learn that Admiral Byron had arrived, to supersede Lord Howe in command of the English fleet. This officer, in a week after his arrival, paid a visit to the prison-ships, and seeing the prisoners in such a miserable condition, he ordered, with his accustomed humanity, better accommodations to be prepared, and learning the peculiar position of Lieutenant Barney, he ordered him to be removed to his ship, where he was treated with great kindness. He was allowed to go on shore whenever he wished, and



never showed himself so unworthy of confidence as not to return.

For nearly five months he remained in this situation, when an opportunity offering, he was exchanged, and again offered his services to the American authorities; but, there being no vacancy at the time, he determined to visit his relatives and friends. Still his mind was bent upon the sea, and, disdaining a life of idleness, he took command of "a fine little schooner, armed with two guns, and eight men," bound for St. Eustatia.

In going down the bay, he was attacked by an English privateer and taken; but, fortunately, he was put on shore, with his men, and thus he was saved from a second experience of the horrors of a prison-ship. He immediately set out for Baltimore, where he met his old friend, Captain Robinson, who was in search of him to offer him the situation of first officer in a private ship of which he then had command.

In February 1779, they set sail with a cargo of tobacco, and an armament of twelve guns, and thirty-five men, bound for Bordeaux. After they had been out a few days, they were chased by the *Rosebud*, of sixteen guns, Captain Duncan. An action followed; and Captain Robinson, on observing indications of the enemy's intention to board, left Barney to command the stern-chaser, while he went on the gundeck, ready to give the enemy a broadside should he make the attempt. Barney, believing that she was at one time running up for this purpose, loaded the gun with grapeshot and a "crowbar," which, by cutting up the enemy's rigging, and nearly severing his foremast, had the desired effect, and the British commander



thought proper to sheer off, and leave Captain Robinson to repair his damages at leisure. The enemy lost forty-seven men, in killed and wounded. The voyage was continued without farther interruption; and the vessel having discharged her cargo, returned home. On her homeward passage, she came up with an English letter of marque ship, of equal force and weight of metal, which, after a long contest, was forced to surrender, and Lieutenant Barney was placed in command of her, on her passage to Philadelphia. When he arrived there, not finding any vacancy in the naval service, he determined not to enter the merchant service, but to spend his leisure time among his relatives in Philadelphia and Baltimore.

While residing at the former place, he became acquainted with Miss Bedford, daughter of Gunning Bedford, Esq., to whom he was married, on the 10th of March, 1780.

He remained a month at Philadelphia, when he was advised to undertake some commercial enterprise, which he determined to do, and, accordingly, set out with that purpose; but his whole fortune, which he carried with him, was secretly stolen from him; and he returned to his wife, but never spoke about the missing money. As if by way of consolation, in a few days he was ordered to the *Saratoga*, of sixteen guns, under Captain John Tams. He immediately went to sea.

They had not been out many days, before they fell in with a British ship, of twelve guns, and soon captured her. It seemed as if fortune had now determined to smile upon our hero, for the next day they encountered a British ship and two brigs, and, after a hard-



fought battle, they succeeded in taking all three. During the action, Lieutenant Barney, with fifty men, boarded the largest ship, mounting thirty-two guns, with ninety men, and after a terrible conflict obtained possession of the deck, and soon the American colours were at the masthead.

Barney, in the largest ship, was ordered to steer for the Delaware; but he soon discovered that she leaked fearfully, and the next day observed a small squadron in chase, and, resistance being out of the question, he surrendered to Captain Anthony J. P. Malloy, of the *Intrepid*, seventy-four. By this commander he was treated in the most brutal manner. Yet, when he afterwards came to reflect upon his lot, he found that the *Saratoga* and crew perished at sea, and were never heard of, and that his being appointed to the command of the prize, and his capture by the inhuman Malloy, were the means of preserving him for future service. The *Intrepid* sailed soon after for New York, when Barney was removed to the *Yarmouth*, seventy-four, (December 1780,) to be sent to England, where they were to receive the punishment of their "rebellion." On the passage, the prisoners—amounting to about sixty—were confined in the most loathsome of dungeons, without light or pure air, and with a scanty supply of provisions.

They thought, when they arrived at Plymouth, that their privations were at an end; but they were only removed to another prison-ship, which, although dirty and crowded, was, in some measure, better than the one they had left. From this, contrary to expectation, as soon as they were so much recovered as to be able to walk, they were brought on shore and con-



fined in Mill prison, where they met the anxious faces of several hundred American prisoners, who had undergone the same privations as themselves.

This prison was surrounded by two strong walls, twenty feet apart, and was guarded by numerous sentries. There were small gates in the walls, and these were placed opposite each other, the inner one generally remaining open. The prisoners were allowed the privilege of the yard nearly all day, and this set the inventive mind of Barney upon the scheme which, in the end, terminated in his liberty; not, however, without infinite danger and trouble. He set about finding out some small chance which might afford the least hope of release; and having discovered one of the sentries that had served in the United States, and remembered the kindness with which he had been there treated, Barney and he formed the means of escape. It was arranged that Barney should affect to have hurt his foot and obtain a pair of crutches, and thus lull suspicion.

On the 18th of May, 1781, he habited himself in the undress uniform of a British officer—the whole covered with an old greatcoat, and, by the aid of the sentinel, cleared the prison; when he threw off the coat, and soon arrived at the house of a well known friend to the American cause, in Plymouth. That he might not be soon missed, he got a lad, who, after answering to his own name, was to get out, and answer to Barney's, in the yard, which little stratagem succeeded admirably. When Barney arrived at the friend's house, he made preparations to leave as soon as possible, well knowing that if any of the British were detected harbouring him, they would be con-



victed of high treason. In the evening, therefore, he departed to the house of his friend's father, at a considerable distance, where he would be safer. On arriving there, he was surprised to find two of his old friends—Americans—who had been, for some time, anxiously waiting for an opportunity of returning home, and now thought that the time had arrived.

Lieutenant Barney determined to sail for the French coast, and, for this purpose, he and the two gentlemen purchased a small fishing vessel, and habiting themselves in some fishermen's old apparel, they set sail on their intended voyage. Admiral Digby's fleet lay at the mouth of the river, and our adventurers had to pass through the midst of them, and then run the chance of capture by the numerous British cruisers, which continually ply about the channel. This was a daring undertaking, as the fleet, he thought, had doubtless received notice of his escape, and the enemy would be rigid in their search. He, therefore, determined to act with coolness, and, if intercepted, to give such answers to the questions put to him, as might best lull suspicion. If he was detected, he would pay for the attempt with his life.

He knew that if his escape was detected, that it would be immediately communicated to the fleet, and thus lessen his chances; especially as the least unusual appearance in his assumed character, would excite immediate suspicion. Even should he be able to pass through the fleet, the British channel abounded with the English cruisers, which were quite adept in the art of picking up stragglers. With these dangers painted in living colours before his eyes, he preserved his usual self-possession, and inspired with confidence



his companions, who had never handled a rope, and relied exclusively upon his daring.

By sunrise, the next morning, they were "under way," the two gentlemen remaining below, and Lieutenant Barney and the servant being the only ones on deck, to avoid suspicion. With a good breeze and a favourable tide, it was not long before they were in the midst of the hostile fleet, which seemed to take no notice of them. Their hearts beat quick when they were thus hanging between life and death; but as soon as the last of the enemy was passed, they declared themselves safe through *that* portion of the ordeal.

But what attempt ever ended to the satisfaction of the undertaker? Before the enemy were more than clear out of sight, the practised eye of Barney caught a sail which he knew to be bearing down upon him. He saw that resistance was out of the question; but that if he managed the affair adroitly, he *might* escape. It was now that he was called to exercise that firmness of mind, coolness and contempt of danger, and quickness of resource in time of need, that ever distinguished his character, and showed him to be a man of no ordinary natural talents. In less than an hour the privateer—for such she was—came alongside, and sent an officer to see "what he wanted steering for a hostile coast." The first questions that were put, and answered unhesitatingly, were—what he had on board? and where he was bound? Of course he had nothing on board, and his destination was France—on business of importance from the ministry; at the same time untying the rope that bound the old coat around him, and displaying the British half-uniform.



The officer touched his hat, begged pardon, and said he would go on board and report to the commanding officer.

The result of the interview was that Barney was made a prisoner once more, and ordered with a prizemaster to Plymouth. But being forced by stress of weather into a small bay, near Plymouth, he contrived to escape from his captors, and find his way to the mansion of the venerable clergyman, at Plymouth. Deeming it unsafe to remain there, lest he might be discovered, after a few days he set out at midnight in a postchaise for Exeter, and from thence by stages to Bristol, where he had a letter of credit to an American gentleman.

Here he remained for three weeks, and from thence he went to London, directed to a countryman, who received him kindly, and offered his services towards effecting his final escape. After remaining here for six weeks, he found an opportunity of sailing for France; and after an extremely boisterous and squally passage, reached Ostend, from whence he soon found his way to Amsterdam, where he seized the opportunity of paying his respects to Mr. John Adams, then Minister Plenipotentiary from the United States to Holland. Through the courtesy of this gentleman, he obtained a passage to his own country, and, after some adventures, reached Philadelphia, on the 21st of March, 1782.

But he was not long allowed to enjoy the pleasure which he expected, after such a trial of danger and fatigue. In less than a week after he arrived at Philadelphia, he was offered the command of the *Hyder Ally*, of sixteen guns, fitted out by the state authorities

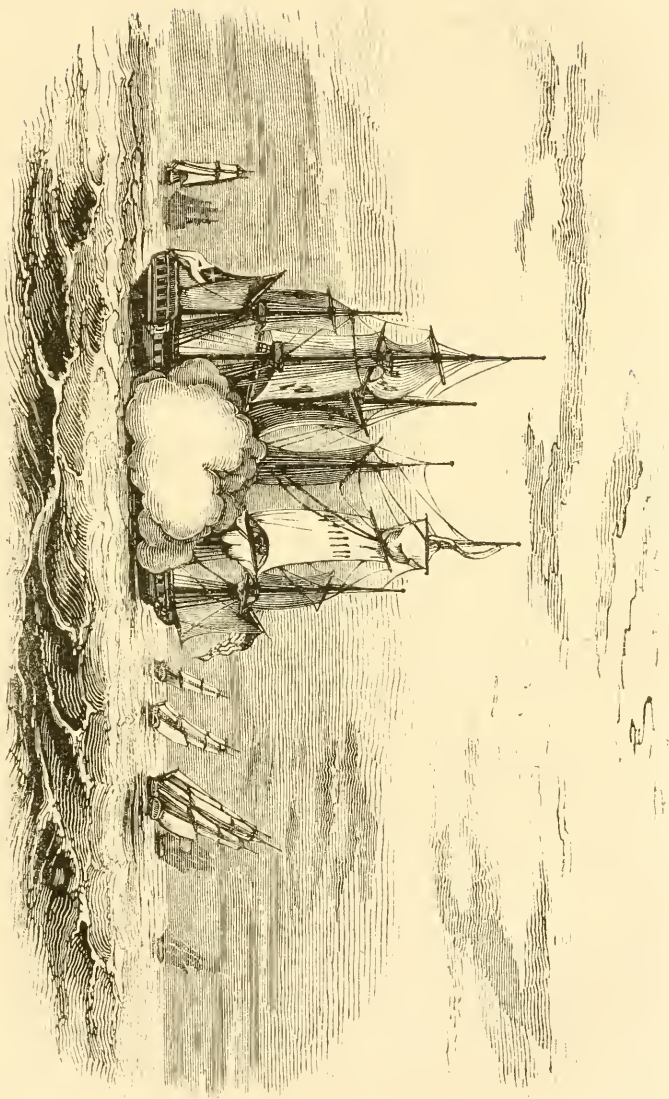


of Pennsylvania, to repress the enemy's privateers, with which Delaware river abounded.

On the 8th of April, 1782, he entered upon his destined service, which was to convoy a fleet of merchantmen to the capes, and protect them from the "refugee boats," with which the river abounded. While waiting at the capes, he was assailed by two ships and a brig belonging to the enemy, who, finding him unsupported, commenced a furious attack, which he sustained with great coolness, while his convoy were safely retiring up the river. The brig came up first, and gave him a broadside as she was passing; but kept her course up the bay after the convoy, while Barney waited for the ship, which was coming up rapidly. Having approached within pistol shot, the Hyder Ally poured a broadside into her, which somewhat staggered the enemy, who thought Barney would "strike his colours." The enemy seemed disposed to board, and was ranging alongside of him, when he ordered the quartermaster, in a loud voice, to "port the helm!"—having previously given him secret instructions to put the helm hard a-starboard, which latter order was obeyed; by this manœuvre the enemy's jibboom caught in the fore-rigging of the Hyder Ally, thus giving her a raking position, which Captain Barney knew how to improve. The firing on both sides was tremendous;—an idea of it may be obtained from the fact, that more than twenty broadsides were fired in twenty-six minutes! In the mizenstaysail of the General Monk there were afterwards counted, three hundred and sixty-five shot-holes. During the whole of this short but glorious battle, Captain Barney was stationed



Hyder Ally and General Monk.









upon the quarterdeck, exposed to the fire of the enemy's musketry, which was excessively annoying, and began to be felt by the men, insomuch that Captain Barney ordered a body of riflemen, whom he had on board, to direct their fire into the enemy's top, which immediately had the desired effect.

The capture of the General Monk was one of the most brilliant achievements recorded in naval history. The General Monk mounted eighteen guns, and had one hundred and thirty-six men, and lost twenty men killed, and thirty-three wounded. The Hyder Ally had sixteen guns, and one hundred and ten men, and lost four men killed, and eleven wounded.

All the officers of the General Monk were wounded, except one. The captain himself was severely wounded. The brig which accompanied the enemy ran ashore to avoid capture. Captain Barney now followed his convoy up to Philadelphia. After a short visit to his family, he returned to his command, where he soon captured the "Hook-'em-snivy"—a refugee schooner which had done a great deal of mischief on the Delaware.

These captures struck such terror among the privateers, that they began to disperse to more profitable grounds. In consequence of these glorious actions, Captain Barney was presented with a gold-hilted sword, in the name of the State.

The General Monk was purchased by the United States, and refitted under the title of General Washington. The command of her was given to Captain Barney, who was sent to sea, May 13th, 1782, with sealed orders, which he was requested not to open until he came to a certain latitude at sea. He had



under his command fifteen or sixteen vessels—privateers and letters of marque—and from this circumstance he was now fairly entitled to the title of commodore. When he arrived at the capes he met three frigates coming in, and the convoy immediately retired up the bay, and left Barney to encounter the frigates. During the night he escaped, and was chased by one of the frigates, but outsailed her, and got beyond pursuit, when he opened the private instructions which he had received from the commissioners of the State.

He was prohibited from engaging the enemy, if it should take him out of his course. He delivered his letters to the French and Spanish Admirals, in the West Indies, and returned to the Delaware, where he routed a whole fleet of refugee boats, when he returned to Philadelphia and again visited his family. But this was of short duration, for he was soon appointed to carry despatches to France, and bring home a considerable sum of money, which the King of France had loaned to the American government. On his return home, he was furnished with a passport, under the *sign manual of the King of England*: when he arrived near the Delaware, he was chased by three ships of war, and only saved himself by anchoring near shore in *three fathoms* water, and taking the first opportunity of getting off again.

Upon the cessation of hostilities—which happened soon after—the General Washington was changed into a packet, while Captain Barney still continued in command of her. Government, however, finding little use for her, sold her, and Captain Barney determined to enter into a commercial enterprise. This,



however, was not so profitable as he expected, and finding his means decreasing, he determined to move to Kentucky where he had purchased a tract of land. At the close of the year, he visited his new farm, but not finding any inducements to emigrate, he returned to his family, and abandoned the idea of living in the western country.

After being appointed to several civil offices, Captain Barney again went to sea for the improvement of his health; and, in one of his voyages, when he had arrived at Cape François, he realised enormous profits by the sale of his cargo of flour, there being none in market. While here, a dispute arose between the agents of government and the army and navy officers, which afterwards involved the whole town, and in an affray Captain Barney, although neutral, was near losing his life, and did not escape without the loss of a great deal of his property. After his escape from this scene of insurrection, and when he thought himself safe, he was boarded by the officers from three British privateers or pirates, who proceeded, in the most insolent manner, to rifle his ship. In a week, however, an opportunity offering, he rose upon the captors, and brought the officers and their crew to Baltimore, when the affair became the subject of correspondence between the governments of the two nations.

Captain Barney, finding that trading to the West Indies was highly lucrative, determined to make another voyage; but determined not to be taken again by privateers; and, accordingly, put his ship in a condition to resist the insolence of such petty cruisers in future. She was armed with sixteen guns, and



thirty men, besides thirty passengers. In the Sampson, thus armed, he made a profitable voyage to Port au Prince; and when homeward bound, he was chased by the frigate Penelope, and ordered aboard, which, when he had done, high words having passed, he was ordered under custody, and conveyed to Jamaica, committed to prison, and afterwards the grand jury brought in a bill against him for piracy, founded on the recapture of his own ship. On the trial, however, he was acquitted merely on the evidence offered on behalf of the prosecution.

Soon after this, he set sail for Philadelphia, and from thence to Baltimore, (May 1794,) to relate his numerous adventures to his anxious friends. He had not been long here, before he was appointed to command one of the six ships which Congress had determined to provide, as the nucleus of a naval force. His name was fourth on the list, being after one who was a military officer; and he determined not to accept the commission. The Cincinnatus was then lying at the wharf, ready for sea, and being offered the command he accepted it, and sailed for France.

In consequence of offers which were made to him by the French Directory, while in this country, Commodore Barney entered their service as *Chef de Division*—i. e., commodore—and displayed his usual courage, ability, and activity, in his consequent encounters with the English. We regret that our limits will not admit of a full account of his foreign service, which, owing to the injustice of the Directory, was not only unrequited, but appears to have occasioned the loss of the property which Commodore Barney had previously acquired. One circumstance we



cannot pass over. It is his escape from the Chesapeake with a French squadron, when the bay was blockaded by an English fleet of greatly superior force.

The stratagem by which he escaped to sea has been greatly admired. Having anchored in sight of the enemy, until night, he sailed up the bay, out of their sight, under cover of the darkness. In the morning, the English, supposing him to have escaped, put to sea in chase, and when they were gone, Barney came out and got to sea. After his return, having spent the period from 1798 to 1802, in dancing attendance on the French Directory and Napoleon, in hopes of having his claims for services and money advanced, he found himself cheated out of two hundred thousand dollars. He now demanded his discharge from the French service, which was at first politely refused by Napoleon, but eventually granted in 1802; and he was placed upon the pension roll with an annuity of fifteen hundred dollars. Satisfied at having a claim thus acknowledged, which he might have obtained in full if he could have stooped to the meanness of bribing the Directory, he never claimed a dollar of the pension.

The next active service in which we find Commodore Barney employed, was the command of the privateer *Rossie*, at the commencement of the late war with Great Britain. In ninety days he captured eighteen ships, valued at two millions and a half of dollars.

In the summer of 1813 he was offered the command of the flotilla to be fitted out for the defence of the Chesapeake bay, which he willingly accepted; and he



instantly set about fitting out and manning his gunboats and barges. This operation occupied him a considerable time; and in April, 1814, he had ready for action, twenty-six gunboats and barges, and nine hundred men. He determined to attack Tangier island; but a large force of the enemy obliged him to retire as far as St. Leonard's creek, where, being still pursued, he retired farther up. Several attempts were subsequently made against him, but with dreadful loss to the assailants, who sought the protection of their larger ships.

The enemy then turned their operations into a blockade, and kept the Commodore inactive, while they went into the country, and carried off many of the people prisoners on board their fleet. Barney having received a small reinforcement from the Secretary of the Navy, determined on an attack upon the blockading squadron, which was to be seconded by a battery of two guns on shore. The attack was made with great bravery by the flotilla, but being unsupported by the battery, Barney was forced to retire. The fruits of victory, however, he obtained; for the enemy soon steered down the river, perfectly satisfied with one attack of the Commodore.

The next action in which we find him engaged, was at the advance of the British on the city of Washington.

The history of this affair is one which it is impossible to dwell upon with satisfaction. Almost the only redeeming feature about it, from the first landing of General Ross's troops, to their final departure from the desecrated capitol, is the gallant resistance of Barney and his brave marines, when deserted by



those very men whose incapacity had placed them in a false position, and whose duty it was to have supported them in the defence. As it was, Barney and his party kept the enemy in check, until nearly every officer was killed or wounded, the Commodore himself so severely, as to render it impossible for him to accompany the retreat, which he was finally compelled to order. He consequently fell into the hands of the British, who, with that characteristic respect for heroism, which they often display, instantly offered him a parole. Having accepted it, he was conveyed by British sailors to Bladensburg, the gallant tars refusing to accept the fifty dollar bill, which he tendered as a compensation for their trouble.

After remaining at Bladensburg a single day, Commodore Barney was conveyed to his farm, at ElkrIDGE. The ball which he had received in his thigh, could not be extracted without considerable risk; and the surgeons suffered it to remain till the wound was healed. It subsequently gave the Commodore much inconvenience, and was thought to have been ultimately the cause of his death.

As an acknowledgment of his gallantry and good conduct at the battle of Bladensburg, an elegant sword was presented to the Commodore, by the corporation of Washington. On the 8th of October he was exchanged, and two days afterwards he resumed his command of the flotilla. Before he could have any new opportunity for distinction, hostilities were terminated by the Treaty of Ghent.

The flotilla was disbanded, and his gallant crews discharged; when, having settled his accounts with the government, Commodore Barney was sent to



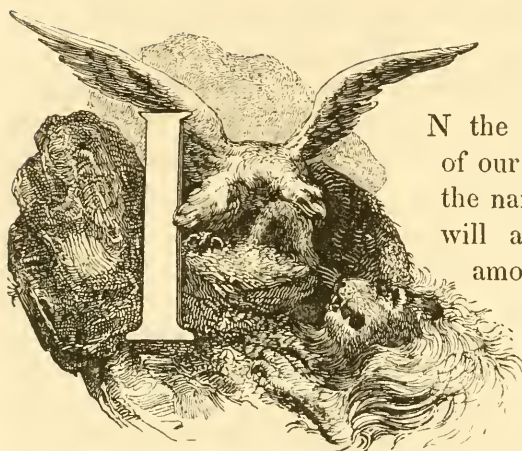
Europe, as the bearer of despatches to the American Plenipotentiaries, which he faithfully delivered, and returned to Baltimore, October 13th, 1815. He now retired to his farm, where he suffered much from his wounded limb. After this he continued to be occupied with endeavouring to remedy the effect of a want of economy in his domestic business arrangements, until the death of Colonel Nathaniel Ramsay, when he was appointed Naval Officer, in the custom house, at Baltimore. Being in ill health, he appointed his son William his deputy.

Commodore Barney's death, which took place at Pittsburg while he was on a journey to the west, happened on the first of December, 1818, in the sixtieth year of his age.

In the character of Commodore Barney we recognise all the elements of a popular hero. To a noble and commanding presence, he added that cordiality and kindness of manner, which is universally recognised as the evidence of a feeling heart; while his humanity—his daring courage—his earnestness in the despatch of business, and his incorruptible fidelity in the discharge of duty, commanded the esteem of every administration he served, and the affection of every man he commanded. We regret that our narrow limits have not permitted us to copy a few of the numerous anecdotes, which enrich the biography written by his fair relative, to which we have already referred—a work which we recommend especially to the notice of all who delight in the records of generous and heroic deeds.



## EDWARD PREBLE.



IN the brilliant roll  
of our naval heroes  
the name of Preble  
will always stand  
among the most  
conspicuous.

He was one  
of the most  
active and  
efficient of-

ficers of his time ; and it was by his gallantry and consummate ability that the war with Tripoli was conducted in a style which reflects the highest honour on the American flag.

COMMODORE EDWARD PREBLE was born August 15th, 1761, in that part of Falmouth in Casco bay which is now Portland, in the State of Maine. His father was the Hon. Jedidiah Preble, who was a brigadier-general under the government of the Massachusetts bay ; and, after the revolutionary war began, a member of the council and senate. He died in the year 1783, aged 77.

Edward Preble, from early childhood, discovered a strong disposition for hazards and adventures, and a firm, resolute, and persevering temper. Possessing



an athletic and active frame, he delighted in exertion, and particularly in sporting with a gun, in which he displayed superior skill. His constitution, naturally robust, was corroborated by this athletic exercise.

His father, with a view to a college education and liberal profession for his son Edward, placed him, at a suitable age, at Dummer academy, Newbury, then under the care of the late Mr. Samuel Moody, a celebrated teacher. Here he was employed in Latin and other studies, and though the bias of his nature to action and enterprise proved an overmatch for the attractions of literature and sedentary occupation, his time at school yielded valuable fruit. The correctness and propriety of expression in his letters and orders, the quality and cast of his conversation, and the general resources of his mind showed him indebted to early culture as well as to the opportunities he enjoyed from much intercourse with the world and his standing in society. He doubtless, with others, experienced the benefit of having a preceptor who made it his care and gratification to discover and fan the spark of honourable ambition in the minds of his pupils. He was particularly attentive to their characteristic individual traits ; and fond of viewing them on the most favourable and indulgent side. He was struck with the marks of a fearless invincible spirit in Preble ; and though aware of its disadvantages and hazards to its possessor, was disposed, in this instance, accompanied as it was with ingenuous feelings and a disdain of all baseness, to regard it as a prognostic of good. A single anecdote in illustration we venture to record, trusting that none of our readers, young or old, will receive it in ill part, or think it capable of











any evil use. The good preceptor, with a dear love for his pupils, was liable sometimes to gusts of passion, portentous in appearance, though commonly harmless in effect. On one occasion, our hero, in an encounter with a schoolfellow, had given a blow, which covered his face with blood. On the boy presenting himself in this plight in school, and announcing Preble as the author of his misfortune, the master's ire was raised to a tempest—seizing the fire-shovel, he sprung towards the offender, and aimed a blow at his head; which, however, he took care should just escape on one side of his mark, and fall on the desk. He repeated the motion, bringing down his deadly weapon on the other side with the utmost violence. The boy never changed his attitude or countenance, sitting perfectly erect, and looking calmly at the assailant. The latter, from being pale and quivering with rage became instantly composed, and turning away exclaimed “that fellow will make a general.” Against the wishes and hopes of his father, Edward persisted in that predilection for the sea which he had always shown; and leaving school after two or three years, he entered on board a ship. His first voyage was to Europe in a letter of marque, Captain Frend. On their return, they had a severe time on the coast through head winds and extreme cold. The young sailor was conspicuous for his activity and usefulness in this trying exigence.

About the year 1779 he became midshipman in the state ship Protector, twenty-six guns, commanded by that brave officer, John Foster Williams, who has always spoken with emphasis of the courage and good conduct of Mr. Preble, while in his ship.



On the first cruise of the Protector, she engaged off Newfoundland, the letter of marque Admiral Duff, of thirty-six guns. It was a short but hard-fought action. The vessels were constantly very near, and much of the time alongside, so that balls were thrown from one to the other by hand. The Duff struck, but taking fire about the same time, she in a few minutes blew up. Between thirty and forty of her people were saved and taken on board the Protector, where a malignant fever soon spread and carried off two-thirds of Captain Williams's crew. He returned to an eastern port, and landing his prisoners and recruiting his men sailed on a second cruise. Falling in with a British sloop of war and frigate, the Protector was captured. The principal officers were taken to England, but Preble, by the interest of a friend of his father, Colonel William Tyng, obtained his release at New York, and returned to his friends.

He then entered as first lieutenant on board the sloop of war Winthrop, Captain George Little, who had been Captain Williams's second in command in the Protector, had scaled the walls of his prison at Plymouth, and with one other person escaping in a wherry to France, took passage thence to Boston.

One of Mr. Preble's exploits, while in this station, has been often mentioned as an instance of daring courage and cool intrepidity not less than of good fortune. He boarded and cut out an English armed brig of superior force to the Winthrop lying in Penobscot harbour, under circumstances which justly gave the action great eclat. Little had taken the brig's tender, from whom he gained such information of the situation of the brig, as made him resolve to



attempt seizing on her by surprise. He ran her alongside in the night, having prepared forty men to jump into her, dressed in white frocks, to enable them to distinguish friend from foe. Coming close upon her he was hailed by the enemy, who, as was said, supposed the Winthrop must be her tender, and who cried out, "you will run aboard!" He answered, "I am coming aboard," and immediately Preble, with fourteen men, sprung into the brig. The motion of the vessel was so rapid that the rest of the forty destined for boarding missed their opportunity. Little called to his lieutenant, "will you not have more men?" "No," he answered with great presence of mind and a loud voice, "we have more than we want; we stand in each other's way." Those of the enemy's crew who were on deck chiefly leaped over the side, and others below from the cabin window, and swam to the shore, which was within pistol-shot. Preble instantly entering the cabin found the officers in bed or just rising: he assured them they were his prisoners, and that resistance was vain, and, if attempted, would be fatal to them. Believing they were surprised and mastered by superior numbers they forbore any attempt to rescue the vessel and submitted. The troops of the enemy marched down to the shore, and commenced a brisk firing with muskets, and the battery opened a cannonade, which, however, was too high to take effect. In the meantime the captors beat their prize out of the harbour, exposed for a considerable space to volleys of musketry, and took her in triumph to Boston.

Lieutenant Preble continued in the Winthrop till the peace of 1783. This vessel is acknowledged to



have rendered eminent service by protecting our trade near our shores, and picking up a great number of the small privateers which issued from the British ports to the eastward.

From this period the flag of our nation began to be displayed in every sea, and her ships to visit every mart in both hemispheres. Mr. Preble was a ship-master in successive voyages, to various places, near and distant.

In the year 1798, the accumulated injuries and insults of the rulers of France awakened a spirit of resistance in the people and government of this country. The president uttered a loud call for a navy, and obtained a hearing. That class of our statesmen and citizens, who had always thought a maritime force an indispensable instrument both of defence and negotiation, and who had often before pleaded for it in vain, embraced the occasion to begin the good work. In this and the following year, fifteen frigates, and about twelve other vessels of war were built and commissioned. It was fortunate for the prosperity and usefulness of this infant establishment that many of the naval heroes of the revolution, who had been accustomed to maritime warfare, were of an age to be employed in the service, and acknowledged the claim of their country to the benefit of their experience.

Of the five first lieutenants, first appointed, Mr. Preble was one. In the fall and winter of 1798-9 he made two cruises as commandant of the brig *Pickering*. The next year, 1799, he received a captain's commission, and the command of the frigate *Essex*, of thirty-six guns. January 1800, he made a voyage in



her to Batavia, whither he was sent with Captain James Sever in the Congress to convoy our homeward bound trade from India and the East.

The day after leaving port, a snow storm came on, and they parted from the three vessels under convoy out. On the 12th, in a heavy gale, he lost sight of the Congress. She unfortunately was dismasted and obliged to put back. The Essex pursued the voyage alone; after waiting a suitable time at the Cape of Good Hope to see if the Congress would come up, she sailed for Batavia. Before and after arriving at that port, Captain Preble made two cruises of a fortnight each in the straits of Sunda. In June, he took under convoy home, fourteen sail of American merchantmen, valued at several millions of dollars. He was separated from them in a tremendous gale off the bank of Lagullos—but most of them rejoined him afterwards at St. Helena, and were protected till they were considered out of danger. He met few cruisers of the enemy. He gave keen chase to a French corvette, from the Isle of France, which he would have overtaken, but the wind dying away, she escaped by means of her sweeps. He arrived at New York near the end of the year. He had been sick on the voyage, and failed in health exceedingly afterwards. Being appointed to the Adams for the Mediterranean, he was too feeble to take command, and was obliged to resign her to Captain Campbell.

In the year 1803 he was sufficiently recovered to enter again upon duty. At this time he commenced a career in which he acquired great honour; and exalted the character and evinced the importance of our infant navy.



In May of that year he was appointed to the command of the frigate *Constitution*, then lying in Boston, which he was instructed to get ready for sea. In June he received orders to take charge of the squadron destined to act in the Mediterranean, as soon as it should be prepared; consisting of seven sail, viz :—the *Constitution*, forty-four guns; *Philadelphia*, forty-four—already on the station; *Argus*, eighteen; *Siren*, sixteen; *Nautilus*, sixteen; *Vixen*, sixteen; *Enterprise*, fourteen. This force was committed to his direction, for the purpose of protecting effectually the commerce and seamen of the United States against the Tripolitan cruisers on the Atlantic ocean, the Mediterranean, and adjoining seas.

The squadron sailed on the 13th of August, and reached Gibraltar on the 13th of September. Here Commodore Preble learned from Captains Bainbridge and Rogers, that they had seized and detained in the Mediterranean, several vessels belonging to the Emperor of Morocco, and evidently sailing with orders to cruise for Americans. In consequence of this information, Preble wrote to Mr. Simpson, the American Consul at Tangier, desiring him to assure the court of Morocco, that the United States desired to maintain peace with his Majesty on proper terms; but that he should punish as a pirate every Moorish cruiser who should be found to have taken an American. Rogers was to remain a few days on the station, and then join Commodore Preble in Tangier bay, to assist adjusting affairs with the Emperor.

On the 17th, Preble hoisted a white flag in Tangier bay, where he appeared with the *Constitution* and John Adams, having on board the principal Moorish



officers of the prizes taken by Bainbridge and Rogers. The American consul was not allowed to come on board, but remained confined in his house, guarded by sentinels, and having no communication with the ship, but by writing on an open slip of paper. The Emperor was at Fez, at this time, and the governor at Tetuan.

Preble believed that the Moorish court had long meditated war, and waited only a favourable opportunity for declaring it. He determined, therefore, to take a decided course, and convince the Emperor that the system of concession was abandoned. Rogers would co-operate with him; and Preble gave orders to his squadron to bring in for examination all vessels belonging to the Emperor and his subjects. He also despatched several vessels to cruise off the coast of Morocco, and the Philadelphia and Vixen to lie before Tripoli.

The American consul explained these hostile movements to the Emperor, who replied, that if the governor's orders to capture and detain American vessels, had been given under a general discretion, he would refuse his sanction to them.

On the 5th of October, the Commodore anchored in Tangier bay, about a mile and a half from the circular battery, having the Nautilus in company. The frigates New York and John Adams joined him on the 6th; and, on the same day, his Moorish Majesty arrived, and encamped on the beach, opposite the squadron, with a force of about five thousand foot and horse. Preble ordered the ship to be dressed, and a salute of twenty-one guns to be fired, to which the battery returned an equal number. The same



was done by the other frigates the following morning. The Emperor ordered a present of bullocks, sheep and fowls for the squadron, as a token of good will; and the consul gave information that the negotiation would be opened on the arrival of the Emperor's minister.

On the 8th, the Emperor visited the beach in order to view the squadron. The *Constitution* fired the usual salute of twenty-one guns, which greatly gratified his Majesty. Several respectable Moors—among them the captain of the port—came off to see their friends, who were prisoners on board. The consul gave notice next day that the Emperor had ordered the release of the American brig at Mogadore, and that the 11th was appointed for an audience with the Commodore. On the day assigned, Preble landed and repaired to the court, accompanied by Col. Lear, Mr. Morris, and two midshipmen. He desired, in case of any forcible detention, that the commanding officer on board would enter into no treaty for his release; but open an immediate fire upon the town. They were ushered into the presence of the court with the usual formalities, and conversed for some time with the Emperor through an interpreter. His Majesty expressed much sorrow that any difference had occurred, disavowed having given any hostile orders, declared he would restore all American vessels, detained in consequence of any of his governor's acts, and offered to renew the treaty of 1786.

The Commodore and consul, on the part of the United States, promised that the Emperor's property should be restored, and the orders of capture revoked. An interview was then held with the minister, the



details settled, and the mutual stipulations were forthwith executed. The Emperor furnished a formal ratification of the treaty of 1786, and a letter of peace and amity to the President. Thus, by the happy union of prudence and energy, seconded by a competent force, we escaped war with a power, from his formidable situation, and placed our affairs with him in a better condition than before the variance.

The Commodore having nothing at present to fear from Morocco, was at liberty to direct his principal attention to Tripoli. The season, however, was too far advanced for active and permanent operations against the enemy. Yet this officer did not indulge himself in repose, or suffer his forces to be idle. In cruising, where they necessarily at this time of year encountered a rough sea and tempestuous weather, in supplying convoy, and in maintaining the blockade of Tripoli, when practicable, the squadron was fully and arduously employed. It was apparent that the Commodore aimed to do all that was possible, and not merely what was convenient. The Philadelphia and Vixen had been ordered to the coast of Tripoli. The Commodore now formally declared the blockade of that place, and sent notice of the fact to the ministers and consuls of the United States, to be communicated to the respective neutral powers. He found it expedient to go to Cadiz, in order to make up his complement of men, and procure a few supplies not to be obtained at that time at Gibraltar. An unpleasant circumstance, not expected, seldom before experienced by our public vessels, and afterwards remedied by orders of Lord Nelson, made him willing to shorten his stay at the last mentioned port. Several



commanders of British ships of war lying there, insisted on retaining those deserters from the Commodore's squadron, who were believed to be British subjects. It was indispensable to the exercise of discipline, to be protected in his right to his own seamen. The refusal of this essential courtesy, in the present instance, was one reason of his fixing on Syracuse, instead of Malta, for his rendezvous.

Our officer returned from Cadiz on the sixth of November; and having allotted the *Argus*, Captain Hall, to the Gibraltar station, and disposed of his other force, he proceeded to Algiers, where he was to leave Colonel Lear, the consul general. On the 22d, he sailed from Algiers for Syracuse; and on his voyage was informed of the disastrous loss of the *Philadelphia*, Captain William Bainbridge. On the 31st of October, after pursuing a Tripolitan corsair till she came to seven fathoms water, in beating off, she ran on a rock, not laid down in any chart, about four and a half miles from the town. Every exertion to get her off proved ineffectual. Meanwhile she was attacked by numerous gunboats, which she withstood for four hours, whilst the careening of the ship made the guns totally useless. A reinforcement coming off, and no possible means of resisting them appearing, the captain submitted to the horrid necessity of striking to his barbarous enemy. They took possession of the ship, and made prisoners of the officers and men—in number three hundred—with robbery, violence, and insult. In forty-eight hours, the wind blowing in shore, the Tripolitans were able to get off the frigate, and having raised her guns, towed her into the harbour of Tripoli. The Commodore appre-



hended the worst from this diminution of his force—a war with Tunis, and perhaps, with Algiers, at least, a protraction of the present war. He could not but hope the government would repair this loss by another frigate in the spring, and also would furnish him with more small vessels or gunboats. His idea of the amount and distribution of force to be desired, he mentions in a subsequent letter, observing—“we ought to have a brig and schooner to cruise between Cape Bon and Sicily; a brig or schooner off Cape Margaret, to the south of Tripoli; a brig on the coast of Calabria; two frigates, with one schooner and some gun and mortar boats, before Tripoli, and a brig and schooner to cruise from Derne to Bengaza. With such a force, so disposed, Tripoli might soon be brought to any terms we might please to dictate.”

He proceeded to Syracuse, where he was received with much hospitality, and aided by the governor with the accommodations he needed for his squadron. He also found Sir Alexander Ball, at Malta, (which he soon visited,) disposed to show him every good office. December 14th, he sailed with the *Enterprise*, on a winter cruise, amidst boisterous weather; for many days it blew a gale. On the morning of the 23d, the *Enterprise* captured a ketch in sight of Tripoli, which left that port in the night, bound to Bengaza. She was under Turkish colours, and navigated by Turks and Greeks; but had on board two Tripolitan officers of distinction, a son of one of the officers, a number of Tripoline soldiers, and forty or more blacks—men and women—slaves belonging to the Bashaw and his subjects. He at first determined to release the vessel and men claimed by the Turkish captain, and retain



the Tripolines, about sixty in number, as prisoners, hoping they would afford an advantage in negotiation, and, perhaps, be exchanged for some of our countrymen. Before this determination was executed, he ascertained that the captain had been active in taking the Philadelphia. Having received on board this very vessel one hundred Tripolitans, armed with swords and muskets, and substituted the colours of the enemy for his own, he assaulted the frigate, and when she was boarded, plundered the officers. He had no hesitation in retaining the vessel; because she was either a Tripoline, and then a prize, or a Turk, and then a pirate. She was not in a condition to be sent to the United States. He transmitted her papers to government, and, some time after, had her appraised, and took her into the service as the ketch *Intrepid*.

February 3d, 1804, Lieutenant Stephen Decatur, with seventy volunteers, in the *Intrepid*, and accompanied by the *Syren*, sailed for Tripoli, with a view to destroy, as they could not in any event expect to bring out the frigate Philadelphia. On the 16th, the service was accomplished in the most gallant manner. Lieutenant Decatur entered the harbour of Tripoli in the night; and laying his vessel alongside the frigate, boarded and carried her against all opposition. A large number of men were on board, of whom twenty or thirty were slain, and the remainder driven over the side, excepting one boat's crew, which escaped to the shore, and one person made prisoner. The assailants then set fire to her and left her. She was soon in a complete blaze, and was totally consumed. The frigate lay within half gun-shot of



the castle and the principal battery, with her guns mounted and loaded, and two corsairs, full of men, were riding very near. We had none killed, and only one wounded.

From this time till the bombardment of Tripoli, the Commodore was occupied in cruising, in keeping up the blockade of the Tripoline harbour, and in making preparations for an attack. He took the utmost pains to convey supplies and information to Captain Bainbridge, and his officers and men; and, after a time, by means of the good offices of Sir Alexander Ball, succeeded. He tried several times to negotiate for a ransom and treaty; but the demands of the regency were sometimes ridiculously extravagant, and, when lowest, beyond what he thought himself permitted to accord. The designs of warfare he had entertained were checked by a solicitude for the release of his countrymen; though he may, by some persons, perhaps, be thought to have indulged too far his aversion to the payment of a considerable ransom. He found himself able to make their situation as comfortable as the nature of it would admit; and he believed that the infliction of suffering and terror, when the time should come, upon the enemy, would not produce, as it did not, any long continued aggravation of the evils of their condition, while it would essentially serve his country. Indeed, after the destruction of the Philadelphia, the Bashaw at first affected to avenge himself by a severer treatment of the captives; but this was not long persisted in. It was supposed that in case of a formidable attack on the town, the worst that would happen to them would be to be taken into the country for safe keeping.



It must, however, be confessed impossible for any one to have said to what lengths the fury and fanaticism of that people might go, if no concession was made to their pride or avarice, or the pressure of the war should drive them to desperation; our unfortunate countrymen must often have shuddered at the thought of their possible destiny. When the First Consul of France, in March, at the instance of Mr. Livingston, directed his commissary at this regency to mediate for their release, Mr. Beaussier undertook the office; and announced to the Commodore, that one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, with some usual gratuities, would probably effect the object, and that, perhaps, a cartel for the exchange of prisoners might be negotiated, which would reduce the sum. The Commodore did not think himself authorized to agree to these terms, and never would go beyond eighty thousand; not that the amount was important, except on principle, and as it might affect our relations to the other Barbary powers. In June, the Russian court, through their minister at the Porte, interposed; but did not bring the regency to our conditions. From first to last, it was a point of honour with his excellency, the Bashaw, not to give up the American captives for a less sum than had been usually received from most of the powers of Europe, in turn for the ransom of captives of like number and quality. Even after the bombardment in the ensuing summer, he was not ready to yield, though he was really sick of the war. In his view, he was conquered when he ceased to be amply paid for his prisoners. He finally accepted sixty thousand dollars, satisfied, no doubt, that our naval armament would be coeval



at least with his hostility, if not at all times equally active and formidable ; but especially at that moment apprehensive that his brother's general, Eaton, if not disarmed by negotiation, would reinstate Hamet in the sovereignty of Tripoli.

On the 1st of April, the Commodore went to display force at Tunis ; where he found a Tripoline polacre dismantled, having been blockaded for sixteen days by Captain Decatur. The Bey of Tunis had, for some time, been uneasy at his treaty with the United States. Why should he not, like Algiers, have an annual stipend ? He insisted that the Commodore should land and satisfy him for some property alleged to be unlawfully seized by the former squadron. The Commodore made a short answer, that it was not his business, and that he must put to sea. He found it necessary to watch Tunis during the whole of his command. In the spring he took another prize, a Tripoline ; and, upon the presumption of her being condemned, she was estimated, equipped, and put in commission, called the *Scourge*.

Finding that force did not arrive from the United States, our officer resolved to endeavour to make some use of the friendship of Naples. Although he was without diplomatic authority, the minister, General Acton, from personal respect and good will to the service, favoured his application to the King, and the Commodore obtained, as a friendly loan from the King to the United States, six gunboats and two bomb vessels, completely fitted for service ; also liberty to ship twelve or fifteen Neapolitans to serve under our flag in each boat.

With this addition to his armament, on the 21st



July he joined the detachment off Tripoli. His force consisted of the frigate *Constitution*, forty-four guns, twenty-four lb.; brig *Argus*, eighteen guns, twenty-four lb.; brig *Syren*, eighteen guns, eighteen lb.; *Scourge*; schooner *Vixen*, sixteen guns, six lb.; schooner *Nautilus*, sixteen guns, six lb.; *Enterprise*, fourteen guns, six lb.; six gunboats of one brass twenty-six pounder each; and two bombard ketches, each carrying a thirteen inch mortar; the whole number of men one thousand and sixty.

The enemy had on his castle and several batteries, one hundred and fifteen guns; fifty-five of which were heavy battering brass cannon—the others long eighteen and twelve pounders; nineteen gunboats, with each a long brass eighteen or twenty-four pounder in the bow and two howitzers abaft. He had two schooners of eight guns each, a brig of ten, and two gallies, having each four guns. In addition to the ordinary Turkish garrison, stationed upon the fortifications, and the crews of the boats and armed vessels, computed at about three thousand, the Bashaw had called in to the defence of his city more than twenty thousand Arabs. These forces were arranged in the positions best adapted for repelling an attack, and also for seizing the occasion of falling upon any detachment of the invading force, which could be drawn from the main body.\*

The weather prevented the squadron from approaching the enemy till the 28th, when, after

\* A detail of the operations of the American fleet in the Mediterranean, by W. Eaton, Esq., compared with Commodore Preble's despatches, journal, correspondence, and other letters from officers in the squadron, have supplied the facts in the narrative from which the following sketch is compiled.



anchoring within two and a half miles of his line of defence, the wind suddenly shifted and increased to a gale. They were compelled to weigh and gain an offing. On the 1st of August, the gale subsided, and the squadron on the 3d, (the weather being pleasant and the wind at east,) at noon were within two or three miles of the batteries, which were all closely manned.

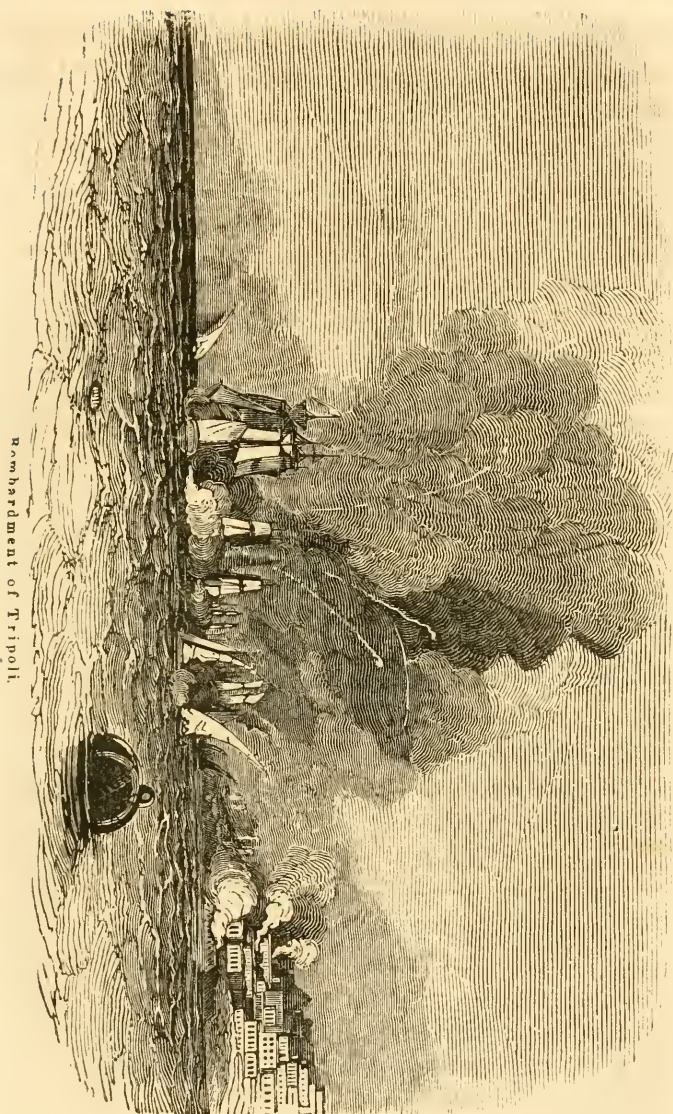
The Commodore, observing that several of the enemy's boats had taken a station without the reef of rocks, which covers the entrance of the harbour, about two miles from its bottom, resolved to take advantage of this circumstance, and made signal for the squadron to come within speaking distance, when he communicated to the several commanders his intention of attacking the shipping and batteries. The gun and mortar boats were immediately manned, and prepared to cast off. The gunboats in two divisions of three each—the first division under Captain Somers on board No. 1, with Lieutenant James Decatur in No. 2, and Lieutenant Blake in No. 3. The second division under Captain Decatur in No. 4, with Lieutenant Bainbridge in No. 5, and Lieutenant Trippe in No. 6. The two bombards were commanded by Lieutenant commandant Dent, and by Mr. Robinson, first lieutenant of the Commodore's ship. At half-past one o'clock, the squadron stood for the batteries—at two, cast off the gunboats; at half-past two, signal for the bombs and boats to advance and attack, and in fifteen minutes after, signal was given for general action. It was commenced by the bombs throwing shells into the town. In an instant the enemy's lines opened a tremendous fire from not less than two



hundred guns, which was promptly returned by the whole squadron, now within musket-shot of the principal batteries.

At this moment Captain Decatur, with his three gunboats, attacked the enemy's eastern division, consisting of nine. He was soon in the centre of them, and the fire of grape, langrage and musketry was changed to a deadly personal combat with the bayonet, spear, sabre and tomahawk. Captain Decatur grappled one of the enemy's boats, and boarded with but fifteen men. He parried the blows of five Turks, who fell upon him with scimetars, so as to receive no injury, till a blow from the boat's captain, a powerful Turk, cleft his blade in two. He instantly closed with the Turk, but, overpowered by muscular strength, he fell under him across the gunnel of the boat. In this position he drew a side pistol, and killed his antagonist. Meantime, his sergeant and a marine soldier, seeing his danger, flew to his relief, and engaged and slew the other four assailants. By this time the other thirteen men had vanquished the residue of the crew, thirty-one in number, and the boat's colours were hauled down. Captain Decatur left this boat in charge of an officer, and immediately with Lieutenant M'Donough, and eight men beside himself, laid another boat on board, which he carried, after a desperate and bloody encounter of a few minutes. The fierce desperation of the Arnaout Turks, who value themselves on never yielding, made the slaughter of the enemy in these conflicts immense. The two prizes of Captain Decatur had thirty-three officers and men killed, and twenty-seven made prisoners, nineteen of whom were severely wounded.





Bombardment of Tripoli.







Lieutenant Trippe boarded one of the enemy's large boats with only a midshipman, Mr. Jonathan Henley, and nine men. His boat falling off before any more could join him, he was left to conquer or perish with the fearful odds of eleven to thirty-six. In a few minutes, however, though for a moment the victory seemed dubious, the enemy was subdued; fourteen of them lost their lives, and twenty-two submitted to be prisoners; seven of whom were badly wounded. Lieutenant Trippe received eleven sabre wounds, some of which were deep and dangerous. The blade of his sword also yielded. He closed with the enemy; both fell, but, in the struggle, Trippe wrested the Turk's sword from him, and with it pierced his body. Mr. Henley, in this encounter, displayed a valour joined to a coolness that would have honoured a veteran. Lieutenant Bainbridge had his lateen-yard shot away, which baffled his utmost exertions to get alongside the enemy's boats; but his active and well directed fire within musket shot was very effective. At one time he had in his ardour pushed forward so that his boat grounded within pistol shot of one of the enemy's formidable batteries, and where he was exposed to volleys of musketry. But, by address and courage, he extricated himself from this situation, and, so ill-directed was the enemy's fire, without receiving any injury.

Captain Somers was not able to fetch far enough to windward, to co-operate with Decatur. But he bore down upon the leeward division of the enemy, and, with his single boat, within pistol-shot attacked five full manned boats, defeated and drove them in a



shattered condition, and with the loss of many lives, under shelter of the rocks.

Lieutenant Decatur, in No. 2, engaged with one of the enemy's largest boats, which struck after the loss of the greatest part of her men. At the moment this brave young officer was stepping on board his prize, he was shot through the head by the Turkish captain, who, by this means, escaped, while the Americans were recovering the body of their unfortunate commander.

The two bomb vessels kept their station, although often covered with the spray of the sea, occasioned by the enemy's shot. They kept up a constant fire and threw a great number of shells into the town. Five of the enemy's gunboats and two gallies, composing their centre division, stationed within the rocks, joined by the boats which had been driven in, and reinforced, twice attempted to row out and surround our gunboats and prizes. They were as often foiled by the vigilance of the Commodore, who gave signal to the brigs and schooners to cover them, which was properly attended to by these vessels, all of which were gallantly conducted, and annoyed the enemy exceedingly. The fire of the Constitution had its ample share in this bombardment. It kept the enemy's flotilla in constant disorder, and produced no inconsiderable effect on shore. The frigate was constantly in easy motion; and always found where danger threatened to defeat the arrangements of the day. Several times she was within two cables' length of the rocks, and three of the batteries, every one of which were successively silenced as often as her broadside could be brought to bear on them; but having no large vessels



to secure these advantages, when circumstances compelled her to change her position, the silenced batteries were reanimated. "We suffered most," says the Commodore, "when wearing or tacking. It was then I most sensibly felt the want of another frigate."

At half-past four, the wind inclining to the northward, and at the same time the enemy's flotilla having retreated behind coverts which shielded them from our shot, while our people were necessarily much exhausted by two hours and a half severe exertion, signal was given for the gunboats and bombs to retire from action; and, immediately after, to the brigs and schooners to take the gunboats and their prizes in tow, which was handsomely executed, the whole covered by a heavy fire from the Constitution. In fifteen minutes the squadron was out of reach of the enemy's shot, and the Commodore hauled off to give tow to the bomb ketches.

The squadron were more than two hours within grapeshot distance of the enemy's batteries, and under a constant fire. But the damage received was in no proportion to the apparent danger, or to the effect produced by the assailants. The frigate took a thirty-two pound shot in her mainmast, about thirty feet from the deck, her sails and rigging were considerable cut; one of her quarterdeck guns was injured by a round shot, which burst in pieces and shattered a mariner's arm, but not a man was killed on board of her. The other vessels and boats suffered in their rigging, and had sundry men wounded, but lost none except Lieutenant Decatur, the brother of the Captain Decatur, so conspicuous in this war. Several circumstances explain this impunity of our



squadron. Where the engagement was close—as with the boats—the impetuosity of the attack as well as our more dexterous use of the weapons of destruction overpowered and appalled the enemy. The barbarians are unskilful gunners. The shower of grapeshot annoyed and discomposed them in the application of what little skill they possessed. The assailing party were so near as to be overshoot by the batteries; especially as the managers of the guns were so fearful of exposing their heads above the parapets, as easily to oversight their object.

Very different was the result of this conflict to the enemy. The American fire was not an empty peal, but a messenger of death in every direction. The three captured boats had one hundred and three men on board, forty-seven of whom were killed, twenty-six wounded, and thirty only fit for duty. Three other boats were sunk with their entire crews, and the decks of their vessels in the harbour were swept of numbers. The effect on shore was not so great as in the shipping, but still such as to spread consternation. Several Turks were killed and wounded, and many guns of the fort dismounted, and the town was considerably damaged.

As might be expected, the bombardment made a powerful impression on the mind of the enemy. The burning of the Philadelphia could not fail to make the Bashaw and his people apprehend something serious from the present commander. When the squadron was seen standing in, however, he affected contempt, and surveying them from his palace, observed, “they will mark their distance for tacking; they are a sort of Jews who have no notion of fight-



ing." The palace and terraces of the houses were crowded with spectators to see the chastisement the Bashaw's boats would give the squadron, if they approached too near. This exultation was very transient. The battle was scarcely joined, when no one was seen on shore, except on the batteries. Many of the inhabitants fled into the country; and the Bashaw, it is said, retreated, with his priest, to his bomb-proof room. An intelligent officer of the Philadelphia, then in captivity, observes, that the Turks asked if those men that fought so were Americans, or infernals in Christian shape, sent to destroy the sons of the Prophet. "The English, French and Spanish consuls," say they, "have told us that they are a young nation, and got their independence by means of France; that they had a small navy and their officers were inexperienced, and that they were merely a nation of merchants, and, that, by taking their ships and men, we should get great ransoms. Instead of this, their Preble pays us a coin of shot, shells, and hard blows; and sent a Decatur, in a dark night, with a band of Christian dogs fierce and cruel as the tiger, who killed our brothers and burnt our ships before our eyes."

On the 5th August, the Commodore prevailed on a French privateer which had left Tripoli that morning, to return with fourteen wounded Tripolines, whose wounds had been carefully dressed, and whom the Commodore sent with a letter to the Bashaw's minister. These prisoners, it is said, informed the prince that the Americans in battle were fiercer than lions, but, in the treatment of their captives, were even more kind than the Musselman. The barbarian at first



misunderstood the motive of sending these men, but afterwards professed to be pleased with the act, and said if he took any wounded Americans they should be likewise returned; but he would not restore any of the Philadelphia's crew. On the 7th, the privateer returned with a letter from the French consul signifying that the Bashaw had very much lowered his tone; and would probably treat on reasonable terms. But nothing definite or satisfactory being proposed by the enemy, and the terms intimated being higher than the commander was willing or felt authorized to make, he prepared for a second attack. The bomb vessels, under lieutenants Crane and Thorne, were to take a station in a small bay west of the town, whence they could distress the town, without being much exposed themselves; the gunboats were to be opposed to a seven gun battery, and the brigs and schooners to support them in case the enemy's flotilla should venture out. At half-past two, the assault was made. Within two hours six of the seven guns were silenced. Forty-eight shells and about five hundred round shot, twenty-four pounders, were thrown into the town and batteries, when, between five and six, P. M., the squadron retired from action. During the engagement, the enemy's gunboats and gallies manœuvred to gain a position to cut off the retreat of ours; but the larger vessels were so arranged as to defeat their design.

In this rencounter, at about half-past three, one of the prize boats was blown up by a hot shot from the enemy's battery, which passed through her magazine.

She had on board twenty-eight officers, seamen, and marines, ten of whom were killed, and six



wounded, among the former were Mr. James Caldwell, first lieutenant of the *Siren*, and Mr. J. Dorsey, midshipman. Mr. Spence, midshipman, and eleven men were taken up unhurt. This young officer, was superintending the loading of a gun when the explosion took place. He, with the survivors, finished the loading, and having discharged her, whilst the boat was sinking, jumped into the sea and was taken up by another boat. The loss this day was twenty-two killed, and six wounded, two of them mortally.

It was afterwards ascertained that the enemy suffered less at this time than on the third.

At eight, in the evening, the *John Adams*, Captain Chauncey, joined the squadron. By him the Commodore had the first official notice that four frigates were on their passage to reinforce his detachment. At the same time also he learned, that, by the appointment of a senior officer to one of the frigates, he would be superseded in the command. The government were highly satisfied with the Commodore, but they had not a sufficient number of captains, juniors to Preble, to supply all the frigates sent out; and they did not think the saving of his feelings would justify the creation of any others. Had they, however, known or anticipated his brilliant success at this time, they would, probably, have ventured upon promoting one or two of the gallant lieutenants in the Mediterranean, in order to keep the Commodore in the chief command.

As the frigates were to sail four days after the *John Adams*, further operations were suspended in expectation of their arrival. No assistance could be received from this frigate, as her guns had been



stowed by the kelson, and their carriages put away in the other frigates, to make room for her cargo, she being sent out as a transport.

Captain Chauncey received orders to remain on the station, that Commodore Preble might make use of his boats and men, should the delay of the expected reinforcement determine him to renew the attack. The squadron kept their station before the town, prepared to strike a decisive blow on the arrival of Commodore Barron.

On the 9th, Commodore Preble, in the brig *Argus*, reconnoitered the harbour. The next day, a flag of truce was seen flying on the shore. The Commodore sent a boat on shore, which was not permitted to land, but returned with a letter from the French consul, advising the Commodore that the Bashaw would accept five hundred dollars each for the ransom of the prisoners, and terminate the war without any consideration or annuity for peace.

The amount of the demand was about one hundred and fifty thousand dollars, which the Commodore rejected, but, for the sake of the captives, and to save the further effusion of blood, offered eighty thousand, and ten thousand for presents. After beginning to treat with the French commissary general, the Bashaw suspended the negotiation, saying he would wait the result of another attack. On the night of the 23d, the bomb vessels, under protection of the gunboats, were sent in to bombard the town. The bombardment commenced at two, A. M., and continued till daylight; but, as it was subsequently ascertained, without much effect.

On the 27th, the weather proving favourable, the



Commodore stood in for Tripoli, and anchored his ship two miles N. by E. from fort English; the light vessels keeping under way. A number of his officers and many of the seamen being employed in the boats, Captain Chauncey and several of his officers, with about seventy seamen, volunteered their services on board the Constitution.

The gunboats, accompanied by the Syren, Argus, Vixen, Nautilus, Enterprise, and boats of the squadron anchored, at three in the morning, within pistol-shot of the enemy's lines, with springs on their cables, and commenced a brisk fire on their shipping, town, batteries, and castle, which was warmly returned. The ships' boats remained with the gunboats to assist in boarding the flotilla, in case it should come out, and the brigs and schooners were kept under way, either to harrass the enemy or to assist the gunboats. At daylight, apprehensive that the ammunition in the gunboats must be nearly exhausted, the Commodore weighed anchor, and, standing in, under the direct fire of fort English, the castle, crown and mole batteries, made signal for the gunboats to retire from action. When arrived within a sure distance, he opened his battery with round and grapeshot, upon thirteen gunboats and gallies, which were closely engaged with ours; sunk one of them, disabled two, and put the rest to flight. He continued running in until within musket shot of the batteries; when he hove to, fired three hundred round shot, besides grape and canister, into the Bashaw's castle, town and batteries. He silenced the castle, and two of the batteries, and a little after six hauled off.



The gunboats fired four hundred round shot, besides grape and canister, with evident effect.

A boat from the *John Adams*, with a master's mate and eight men on board, was sunk by a double-headed shot, which killed three seamen and badly wounded another. The effect of this attack was serious on shore. A thirty-six pound shot penetrated the castle and entered the apartment of the prisoners, and damage was done to houses, and some lives destroyed.

The French commissary now renewed the negotiation for peace, but it was broken off in consequence, as he thought, of one of the squadron approaching the harbour, as a cartel, which, he said, was interpreted by the ignorant and mistrustful Bashaw as a proof of discouragement on the part of the invader.

On the 3d September, the bomb ketches being repaired, as well as the damages sustained by the other vessels in the action of the 27th, the squadron was again ready and disposed for another attack on the town and batteries. Between three and four o'clock, the action commenced and soon became general. As our gunboats bore down on the boats and gallies of the enemy, they gave ground, and retreated under cover of the musketry on shore. The brigs and schooners pursued with the gunboats as far as the depth of the water would permit, and within musket shot of fort English. The action in this quarter now became divided. The brigs and schooners with one division of the gunboats engaged fort English; the other division continued engaged with the boats and gallies.



The two bomb ketches, while directing their shells into the town, were exposed to the direct fire from the Bashaw's castles, the crown, mole, and several other batteries. The Commodore, perceiving their danger, ran his ship between them and the batteries, within musket shot, where not less than seventy guns were brought to bear on him, and there discharged eleven broadsides with so good effect as to silence one of the principal batteries, and to injure the others and town materially. The wind veering to the northward and beginning to blow fresh, at half-past four, P. M., he gave signal to retire from action under cover of the Constitution. In this engagement, although the frigate and vessels were much damaged, not a man was lost. The bomb vessel commanded by Lieutenant Robinson had all her shrouds shot away, and was so shattered in the hull as to be kept above water with difficulty. The Argus received a thirty-two pound shot in her hull, which cut away a bower cable as it entered, and which so checked its velocity, that it fell upon deck without doing injury.

The Commodore had for some time contemplated sending a fire ship into the harbour to destroy the flotilla, and, at the same time, to throw a quantity of shells into the town. Captain Somers volunteered in this service, and, with the assistance of Lieutenants Wadsworth and Israel, fitted out the ketch Intrepid for this expedition. An hundred barrels of gunpowder, and one hundred and fifty fixed shells were placed in the hold, with fuses and combustibles so applied, as to fire them without endangering the retreat of the adventurers. On the evening of the 4th September, Captain Somers chose two fast rowing



boats from the squadron, to bring off the people, having fired the vessel. His own boat was manned by four seamen from the Nautilus, with Lieutenant Wadsworth and six men from the Constitution. At eight, they parted from the squadron and stood into the harbour, convoyed by the Argus, Vixen, and Nautilus, to within a short distance of the batteries. Having gained the inner harbour, and near at the point of destination, she was boarded and carried by two galleys of one hundred men each. At this moment, she exploded. The effect was awful. Every battery was silenced, and not a gun was fired afterwards during the night. Captain Somers is said to have declared to a friend, that, in case the Intrepid should be boarded, as he was apprehensive, he would not be captured. There is every reason to believe that on the enemy proving successful, the captain seized a quick match and touched a train which communicated instant fire to the mine—by which he and his brave companions found, with the enemy, a common death.

Nothing occurred after this till the two squadrons joined, on the 9th of September. Though Commodore Barron took departure from the capes of Virginia on the 5th July, and crossed the Atlantic to the Western Islands in sixteen days, they were fifty days on their passage thence to the coast of Tripoli, having experienced forty-one days head winds, and calms in the meantime.

Here ended Mr. Preble's command, so honourable to himself, and in both its immediate and distant consequences important to his country. In naval tactics his active and discerning mind anticipated the effect



of long and familiar experience. In this enterprise, he displayed the rapidity of conception, and promptitude to act so requisite in critical circumstances, along with the foresight, circumspection, and steady perseverance always necessary to success in difficult undertakings. The energy and intrepidity which marked his character, the passion for achieving deeds of honour that glowed in his breast, were emulated and shared by his officers, and fully seconded by his men, who thought mighty things easy under such a commander. His conduct of this war made an impression on the African governments, that will not soon be effaced, and cannot fail, for a long period of time, to check their disposition to interrupt the peace that has been settled.

All joined in the suffrage to the distinguished merits of the Commodore. His Holiness, the Pope, is said to have remarked, that he had done more towards humbling the antichristian barbarians on that coast, than all the Christian States had ever done. Sir Alexander Ball, in a letter dated September 20th, said—"I beg to repeat my congratulations on the services you have rendered your country, and the hair-breadth escapes you have had in setting a distinguished example. Their bravery and enterprise are worthy a great and rising nation. If I were to offer my opinion, it would be that you have done well not to purchase a peace with the enemy. A few brave men have, indeed, been sacrificed, but they could not have fallen in a better cause, and I even conceive it advisable to risk more lives rather than submit to terms which might encourage the Barbary states to add fresh demands and insults."



After the squadron joined, the Commodore obtained leave to return home, which he was the more willing to do, as it would give the command of a frigate to Captain Decatur. The officers joined in an address to their late commander, containing the strongest expressions of attachment and respect. The Congress of the United States voted the thanks of the nation and an emblematical medal, which were presented by the President with emphatic declarations of esteem and admiration.

When the Commodore returned, he was received and treated every where with distinguished attention. His countrymen showed that they were proud of his fame, and grateful for his services. From this time he was much consulted and employed by the government in the management of their naval concerns—peace was the next year made with Tripoli, and the prisoners ransomed—and our navy was not again ordered abroad.

In the latter part of the year 1806, the health of Mr. Preble began to decline. It was the same complaint—a debility of the digestive organs—under which he was near sinking a few years before. For many months he struggled with his disorder, indulging a hope of recovering till within ten days of his death. Finding that the inveteracy of his malady bid defiance to medical skill, he resolved on a water excursion as a last experiment. On Sunday, the 9th of August, 1807, he went on board a packet and stood out to sea, but finding no relief he returned on the Thursday following, sensible that the hour of his dissolution was approaching. In the view of this event he displayed the fortitude which became his character, and his



exit was in full correspondence with his life. He breathed his last on Tuesday, the 25th of August, 1807, in the forty-sixth year of his age. The inhabitants of Portland united in every mark of respect to his remains. On the day of his funeral, business was suspended, the colours were displayed at half mast from the shipping in the harbour, and he was interred with military honours and the ceremonies of religion and masonry.

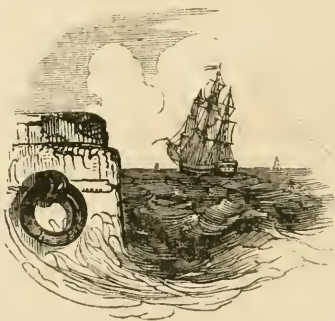
On the intelligence of his death reaching Washington, the firing of minute guns and other marks of naval mourning were ordered in testimony of the honour due to the memory of a patriot and hero; and of the unfeigned sorrow produced by his death.

The person, air and countenance of Commodore Preble answered to his character. His features expressed strong passions along with manly and generous feelings. His attitude was erect yet easy and natural, his step firm, and his whole appearance and port were noble and commanding. In the calm of domestic life and the society of his equals, he was placid and affectionate; in the exercise of authority, peremptory and rigid. But, though he made himself feared, and might be thought sometimes imperious and severe, yet he retained a strong interest in the affections of his officers and men, who were convinced of the goodness of his disposition and the sincerity of his friendship. If he failed in uniformly restraining the impetuosity of his temper, he had no trait of arrogance, malignity or revenge in his nature. Signal instances of his humanity and generosity might be related. He was patient of labour, and in business was remarkable for exactness and despatch. He was



a kind neighbour and useful public-spirited citizen. He cherished his relatives with tenderness, and was the object of their fond regard. He had been several years married, and left a wife and one child—a son—to feel his loss, and to inherit the precious legacy of his honourable name. At the time he died, he had nearly completed an elegant mansion where, in the enjoyment of easy circumstances, and the society of a beloved family, he had looked for the repose endeared by past scenes of toil and danger. It pleased heaven to defeat his plans and terminate his prospects by untimely death, thus teaching us to value our life by the good and noble actions it contains, and not by the time it endures.\*

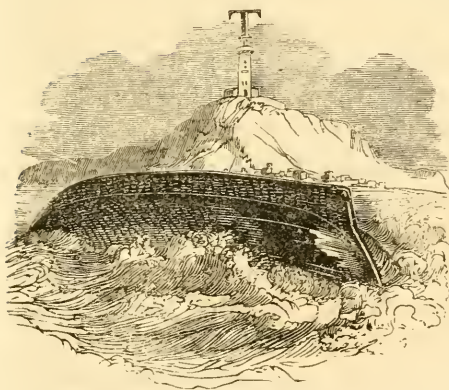
\* Port Folio.







THOMAS TRUXTON.



HE subject of the present memoir, whose deeds shed a lustre on the infant navy of his country, was the son of an eminent English barrister of the State (then Colony) of New York, and

was born at Long Island, on the 17th of February, 1755.

Our hero, in consequence of the death of his father, was placed under the guardianship of his intimate friend, John Troup, Esq., of Jamaica, on Long Island; from whose affectionate care, however, in a short



time, the kindling spark of that spirit, which has since shone so conspicuously in his character, led him to the sea; and, at the early age of twelve years, he embarked on his trial voyage, on board the ship *Pitt*, Captain Joseph Holmes, bound to Bristol. In the following year he was placed, at his own request, under the direction of Captain James Chambers—a celebrated commander in the London trade. During his apprenticeship, when the armament—in consequence of the dispute respecting the Falkland Islands; took place, he was impressed on board the *Prudent*, an English man of war of sixty-four guns; but was afterwards released, in consequence of the application of a person in authority. While on board the *Prudent*, the captain, pleased with his intelligence and activity, endeavoured to prevail on him to remain in the service, and assured him that all his interest should be used for his promotion: but, notwithstanding the prospects thus opened to his youthful and aspiring mind, as he conceived that his engagements with his former commander would not permit him with honour to indulge his wishes, he left the *Prudent*, and returned to his old ship.

In the early part of 1775, he commanded a vessel, and was very successful in bringing considerable quantities of powder into the United Colonies; but, about the close of the same year, when bound to St. Eustatius, he was seized, off the Island of St. Christopher, by the British frigate *Argo*, and detained until the general restraining bill came out, when his vessel and cargo, of which he owned the half, were condemned. But what “ill-wind” can wreck the buoyant mind of the sailor? He made his way from St.



Christopher's to St. Eustatius, and thence, embarking in a small vessel, after a short passage, he arrived in Philadelphia. At this period, the two first private ships of war fitted out in the colonies, called the Congress and Chance, were equipping for sea, and he entered on board the former as lieutenant. They sailed in company, early in the winter of 1776, and proceeded off the Havana, where they captured several valuable Jamaica ships, bound home through the Gulf of Florida; of one of which he took the command, and brought her safe into Bedford, Massachusetts.

In June 1777, in company with Isaac Sears, Esq., he fitted out, at New York, a vessel called the Independence of which he took the command, and, passing through the Sound, (Lord Howe having arrived with the British fleet at Sandy Hook, and blocked up that outlet,) he proceeded off the Azores, where, besides making several other prizes, he fell in with a part of the Windward Island convoy, of which he captured three large and valuable ships; one of which was much superior to the Independence in both guns and men. On his return, he fitted out the ship Mars, mounting upwards of twenty guns, in which he sailed on a cruise in the English channel. Some of his prizes, which were numerous, he sent into Quiberon bay, which, in a great measure, laid the foundation of Lord Stormont's remonstrance to the French court, against the admission into her ports of our armed vessels and their prizes. On his return from this cruise, he settled in Philadelphia, commanded, and, in part owned, during the rest of the war, several of the most important armed vessels built in this place; and brought in from France and the West



India islands large cargoes of the articles, which, in those eventful times, were of the first necessity for the army. While carrying out to France, Thomas Barclay, Esq., our consul general to that country, he had a very close and severe engagement with a British privateer ship of war, of thirty-two guns, (double his own force,) which he obliged to sheer off; and she was afterwards towed into New York, by one of the king's ships, in a very dismantled condition. The ship, then under his command, was called the *St. James*, and mounted twenty guns, with a crew of about one hundred men—not half the number on board his enemy.

Here let us pay a tribute of justice founded upon unquestionable authority. Captain William Jones, of Philadelphia, and lately a member of Congress, being, at this period, a very young man, was patronised by Truxtun, and placed on board the *St. James*, in capacity of third lieutenant; in this station he conducted himself so bravely and handsomely, and with such activity in this engagement, as well as on all other occasions, that he not only received the applause of his commander, but was by him soon after promoted to the first lieutenantcy of that ship; and, at subsequent periods, Truxtun took pleasure, wherever opportunities presented, in doing justice to his merit, by rendering him that applause to which he was entitled as an officer and a man. This he uniformly practised to all who, from their deportment and vigilance in their profession, merited his notice, while under his command. From this voyage he returned with the most valuable cargo brought into the United States during the war. It would be impossible for



us, within the limits of this sketch, to recount the various instances of activity and zeal displayed by this gallant officer, during our struggle for independence, not only at sea, but on two remarkable occasions on the land. We content ourselves with observing, that in all his actions with British vessels of war—many of which were of force greatly superior to his own—he was, invariably, victorious.

After the peace of 1783, he turned his attention to commerce; and was concerned in an extensive trade to Europe, China, and the East Indies, until the commencement of our naval establishment, in 1794; when, unable calmly to behold the rights of his country invaded, he stepped forward at her call, and was one of the first six captains selected by President Washington. The frigate *Constellation*, of thirty-six guns, which he was destined to command, he was directed to superintend the building of, at Baltimore; and she was the first one of that armament at sea.

The *quasi* war, as it is called, between this country and France, under the Directory, having commenced, Commodore Truxtun, with a squadron under his command, was ordered to protect the commerce of the United States in the West Indies. It was while on this service that his brightest laurels were won, by the capture of two French frigates, each of superior force to his own ship.

On the 9th of February, the *Constellation* being alone cruising on her prescribed ground, the Island of Nevis bearing W. S. W., and distant five leagues, made a large ship on the southern board. The stranger being approached by the *Constellation*, showed the American colors, when the private signals



were shown. The chase being unable to answer, further disguise was abandoned, and, hoisting the French ensign, he fired a gun to windward, by way of challenge, and gallantly awaited the contest. This being the first time since the revolutionary war that an American ship had encountered an enemy in any manner which promised a contest, the officers and men were eager for the engagement; and the enemy were not inclined to avoid it. The ships neared, until the *Constellation*, after having been thrice hailed, opened a fire upon her antagonist. A fierce cannonade ensued, while the American was drawing ahead. She suffered much in her sails and rigging, and the fore-topmast was nearly cut off by a shot. This was, in some degree, remedied by Mr. David Porter, a midshipman, who, being unable to communicate the circumstance to others, himself cut the stoppers and lowered the yard, and thus prevented the fall of the mast with its rigging. In the meantime, their superior gunnery gave the action a turn in favour of the Americans, who were at last enabled to decide the contest by two or three raking broadsides, after a combat of an hour, when the American wore round, and would again have raked her, with all their guns, had she not prudently struck.

The prize was the French frigate *L'Insurgente*—one of the fastest vessels in the world. She was greatly damaged, and had lost in all seventy men. The *Constellation* also was much damaged in her rigging, but lost only three men—wounded—one of whom—Mr. James M'Donough—had his foot shot off.

The *Insurgente* carried forty guns, and four hundred and nine men. The American vessel car-



ried thirty-eight guns, and three hundred and nine men.

It was half-past three, in the afternoon, when the Insurgente struck, and Mr. Rodgers, the first lieutenant of the *Constellation* was sent, together with Mr. Porter and eleven men, to take possession and have the prisoners removed ; but, ere this could be effected, the darkness and a rise of wind separated the ships.

The situation of Rodgers, at this period, was unpleasant in the extreme. No handcuffs were to be found, and the prisoners seemed disposed to rebel. Fortunately, Rodgers was well calculated to act with decision in such circumstances, and Porter and the men equally prompt in executing his orders. The prisoners were sent into the lower hold, and a sentinel stationed at each hatchway, with orders to shoot any one who should attempt to come upon deck without orders. Thus he was obliged to spend three days, at the end of which time he arrived at St. Kitts, where the *Constellation* had already arrived.

On the 1st of February, 1800, the *Constellation* came in sight of a strange sail, off the coast of Gaudaloupe. Thinking her to be an English merchantman, Truxtun hoisted the English flag, in order to be hailed by her. This was disregarded, and sail made in pursuit, when the stranger was discovered to be a French man of war. The English flag was lowered, and all made ready for a desperate struggle. The enemy's ship was ascertained to carry fifty-two guns ; but the vessel being very deep, Truxtun was not discouraged by her superior force, but still gave chase. The wind being light during the afternoon, it was not until evening, at eight o'clock, that they came within



speaking distance. The ship then opened a fire upon them; which was returned, and kept up till near one in the morning, when the French ship made all sail to escape. Truxtun ordered to give chase; but was informed that the mainmast had been nearly shot away, and, as it was found impossible to remedy it, the chase was given up.

Soon after the ships separated, the mast fell, and several men were lost by the accident; among them Mr. Jarvis, a midshipman.

Mr. Truxtun, as no port to windward could be reached, bore up for Jamaica, where he arrived in safety. His antagonist, it was ascertained afterwards, arrived at Curacoa, in a very disabled condition, and reported a loss of fifty killed, and one hundred and ten wounded. The loss of the *Constellation* was fourteen killed, and twenty-three wounded, of whom eleven died.

The *Constellation*, at this time, carried twenty-eighteens on her maindeck, and the quarterdeck was supplied with ten twenty-four pound carronades. She numbered three hundred and ten men. The *Vengeance*, the French vessel, carried twenty-eight eighteens, sixteen twelves, and eight forty-two pound carronades. There are various statements of her crew—all between four hundred and five hundred men.

It is certain that, but for the loss of her mast, the *Constellation* would have brought the prize into port; indeed, it is reported, that the *Vengeance* struck three times, but the Americans continuing their fire, the colours were hoisted again.

Commodore Truxtun was rewarded for this exploit



Constellation and Vengeance.









by a promotion to the command of the President—forty-four guns; and was also presented by Congress with a gold medal.

The Constellation was now given to Captain Murray; and Commodore Truxtun, hoisting his broad pennant in the President, made another cruise on the Guadeloupe station, where he rendered eminent service in the protection of the American commerce against French cruisers, until the close of the war.

When the Tripolitan war commenced, in 1802, Commodore Truxtun was ordered to take command of the Mediterranean squadron; and he proceeded to Norfolk for that purpose, when, finding that he was not to be allowed a captain in the flag ship, he tendered his resignation of the command. As the Navy Department chose to consider this step a resignation of his commission, the circumstance, unfortunately for his country, led to his retirement from public life.

After his retirement from the navy, Commodore Truxtun continued to reside in Philadelphia to the close of his life. He filled several important civil offices, and won from all classes of his fellow-citizens not less respect for his private character, than he had previously enjoyed for his brilliant public services. He died in 1822, at the age of sixty-seven.

Commodore Truxtun was one of the bravest officers the American navy can boast. His engagement with the *Insurgente*, as it resulted in the capture of a prize, and was the first action after the navy was re-organized, has procured him great celebrity; but the action with the *Vengeance*, being with a ship of so greatly superior force, which was fairly conquered, and only enabled to escape by an accident, was justly



regarded by Congress as the most deserving of a public testimonial of honour. Both these actions were of immense service, by inspiring the officers and men of our marine, and bringing the navy once more into that high state of popularity which it had enjoyed in the tremendous and glorious period of the Revolution.







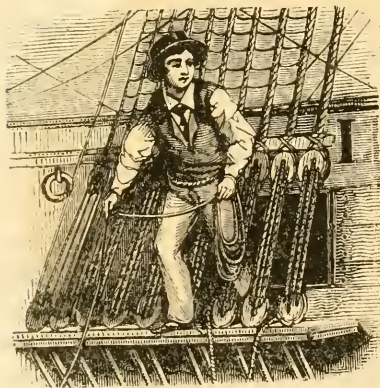








JACOB JONES.



IN preparing the present notice of Commodore Jones's life, we have been chiefly indebted to the assistance of an eminent naval biographer, who had the advantage of serving as an officer under his command, during the whole of the late war with Great Britain—a war in which the subject of this memoir was one of the most distinguished of our commanders.



JACOB JONES, ESQ., of the United States navy, was born about the year 1770, near the village of Smyrna, in the county of Kent, State of Delaware. His father was an independent and respectable farmer, of excellent moral and religious character. His mother was of a good family of the name of Jones; an amiable and interesting woman; she died when the subject of this memoir was yet an infant. Between two and three years afterwards, his father married again, with a Miss Holt, granddaughter of the Hon. Ryves Holt, formerly Chief Justice of the Supreme Court of Delaware; or, as it was then denominated, "The lower counties on Delaware." Shortly after this second marriage his father died, when this his only child was scarcely four years of age. It was the good fortune of our hero to be left under the care of a stepmother, who had all the kind feelings of a natural parent. The affection which this excellent woman had borne towards the father, was, on his death, transferred to the child. By her he was nurtured from infancy to manhood, with a truly maternal care and tenderness. At an early age he was placed at school, and his proficiency in learning was equal to her most anxious wishes. After becoming well acquainted with the general branches of an English education, he was transferred to a grammar school, at Lewes, in Sussex county, conducted by the learned and pious Dr. Matthew Wilson. Under his direction he read the classics with much assiduity, and became well acquainted with the Latin and Greek languages. The writer of this memoir distinctly remembers also, that in the geographical lessons he continually bore off the palm, and received,



beyond all others, repeated proofs of approbation from his preceptor. At the age of eighteen, he left Lewes Academy, and entered on the study of physic and surgery, under Dr. Sykes, an eminent physician and surgeon of Dover, in the county of Kent. With him he diligently prosecuted his studies for four years, after which he attended the usual course of medical lectures of the University of Pennsylvania, and then returned to Dover to commence the exercise of his profession.

He did not, however, continue long in the practice. He found the field already engrossed by a number of able and experienced gentlemen of the faculty, among whom was the late lamented Dr. Miller, of New York. Discouraged by the scanty employment that is commonly the lot of the young physician, and impatient of an inactive life, he determined to abandon the profession for the present, and seek some more productive occupation. This resolution was a matter of much regret among the elder physicians. They entertained a high opinion of his medical acquirements, and considered him as promising to become a distinguished and skilful member of their body. Governor Clayton, (who was himself an eminent physician,) seeing that he was fixed in his determination, conferred upon him the clerkship of the Supreme Court of the State of Delaware, for the county of Kent.

In this office he continued for some time, but the sedentary nature of its duties was uncongenial with his health and habits; he longed to mingle in more active scenes, and possessed that ardent spirit of enterprise that can never rest contented with the



tranquil ease of common life. With a certain bravery of resolution, therefore, or, rather a noble unconcern, he turned his back upon the comforts and emoluments of office ; and resolved upon a measure, as indicative of the force of his character, as it was decisive of his future fortunes. This was to enter as midshipman into the service of his country, in the year 1779, when menaced with a French war.

He was at this time almost twenty-nine years of age, highly respected for the solidity of his understanding and his varied acquirements ; it may readily be imagined, therefore, how greatly his friends were dissatisfied at seeing him in a manner taking a retrograde step in life, entering upon that tedious probation which the naval service peculiarly requires, and accepting a grade which is generally allotted to boys and striplings. It was in vain, however, to remonstrate against a resolution, which, once formed, never vibrated. Jones had determined on embracing the profession ; he had weighed all the peculiar inconveniences and sacrifices incident to his determination, and had made up his mind to encounter and surmount them all. His friends could only console themselves with the reflection, that, if courage, activity and hardihood could ensure naval success, Jones was peculiarly fitted for the life he had adopted ; and it is probable they felt some degree of admiration for that decision of character, which, in the pursuit of what he conceived a laudable object, could enable him to make such large sacrifices of personal pride and convenience.

The first cruises which he made in his new capacity were under the father of our infant navy, the late



Commodore Barry, from whom he derived great instruction in the theory and practice of his profession, and experienced the utmost kindness and civility. He was a midshipman on board the frigate *United States*, when she bore to France Chief Justice Ellsworth and General Davie, as envoys extraordinary to the French Republic. He was next on board of the *Ganges* as midshipman, and, during the whole intervening period between his appointment and the war with Tripoli, he was sedulously employed in obtaining that nautical skill for which he at present is celebrated.

On the breaking out of the war with Tripoli, he was stationed on board of the frigate *Philadelphia*, under the command of the gallant Bainbridge. The disaster which befell that ship and her crew before Tripoli, forms a solemn page in our naval history; atoned for, however, by the brilliant achievements to which it gave rise. Twenty months of severe captivity among a barbarous people, and in a noxious climate, neither broke the spirit nor impaired the constitution of our hero. Blest by nature with vigorous health and an invincible resolution, when relieved from bondage by the bravery of his countrymen, he returned home full of life and ardour. He was soon after promoted to a lieutenancy. This grade he had merited before his confinement in Tripoli, but older warrant officers had stood in the way of his preferment.

He was now for some time employed on the Orleans station, where he conducted himself with his usual judgment and propriety, and was a favourite in the polite circles of the Orleans and Mississippi



territories. He was shortly after appointed to the command of the brig *Argus*, stationed for the protection of our commerce on the southern maritime frontier. In this situation he acted with vigilance and fidelity, and though there were at one time insidious suggestions to the contrary, it has appeared that he conformed to his instructions, promoted the public interest, and gave entire satisfaction to the government.

In 1811, Captain Jones was transferred by the Secretary of the Navy to the command of the sloop of war the *Wasp*, mounting eighteen twenty-four pound carronades, and was despatched, in the spring of 1812, with communications from our government to its functionaries at the courts of St. Cloud and St. James. Before he returned from this voyage, war had been declared by the United States against Great Britain. Captain Jones refitted his ship with all possible despatch, and repaired to sea on a cruise, in which he met with no other luck than the capture of an inconsiderable prize.

He sailed from the port of Philadelphia on the 13th, of October, 1812, with a gallant set of officers, and a high spirited and confident crew. On the 18th of the same month the *Wasp* encountered a heavy gale, during which she lost her jibboom and two valuable seamen. On the following night, being a bright moonlight, a seaman on the look out discovered five strange sail, steering eastward. The *Wasp* hauled to the windward and closely watched the movements of these vessels until daylight next morning, being the 18th, when it was found that they were six large merchant vessels under convoy of a sloop of war. The



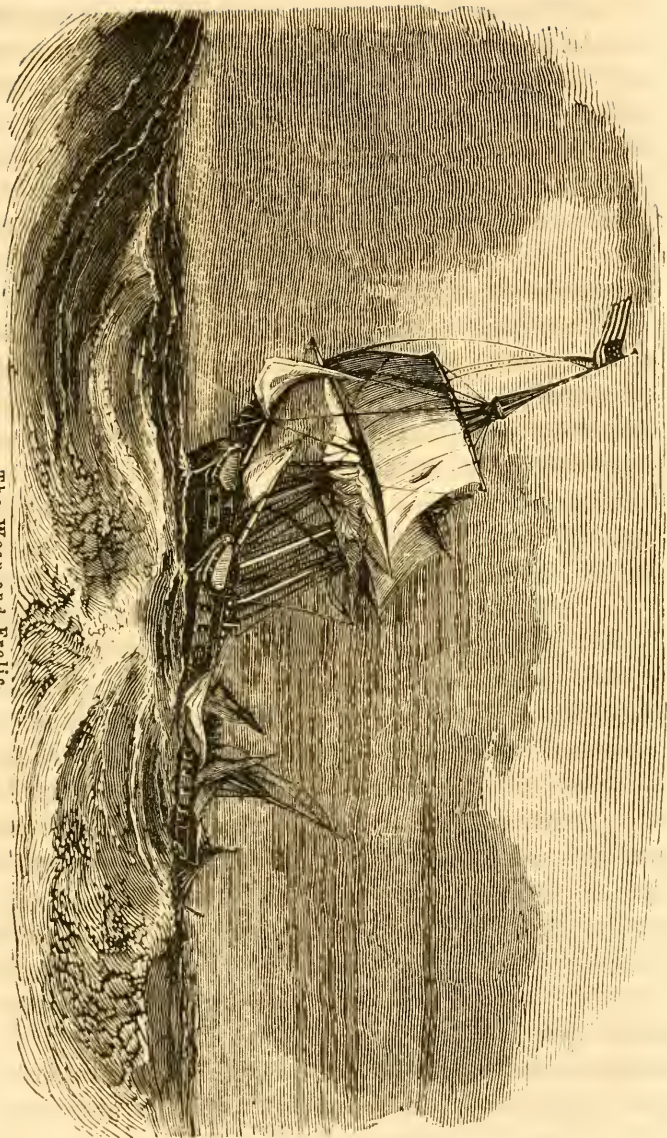
former were well manned two of them mounting sixteen guns each. Notwithstanding the apparent disparity of force, Captain Jones determined to hazard an attack; and as the weather was boisterous, and the swell of the sea unusually high, he ordered down top-gallant yards, closely reefed the top sails, and prepared for action. The convoy sailed ahead and lay to five or six miles distant, while the sloop of war with Spanish colours flying, remained under easy sail the Wasp coming down to windward on her larboard side, within pistol shot displaying the American ensign and pendant. Upon the enemy's being hailed, he hauled down the Spanish flag, hoisted the British ensign, and opened a broadside of cannon and musketry. The fire was promptly returned by the Wasp, the vessels gradually neared each other, and each maintained the combat with great animation the English vessel firing with most rapidity, but, as the result proved, with no great precision. In a few minutes after the commencement of the action, the main-top-mast of the Wasp was shot away, and falling on the topsail yard, across the larboard fore and foretop-sail braces, caused the head yards to be unmanageable during the continuance of the action. In two or three minutes more the gaff and mizzen top-gallant sail were shot away. Each vessel continued in the position in which the action commenced, and maintained a close and spirited fire. Captain Jones directed his officers not to fire except when the vessel rolled downwards, so that the shot was either poured on the enemy's deck, or below it, while the English fired as soon as they had loaded, without regard to the position of their vessel, and thus their balls were



either thrown away or passed through the rigging. The Wasp now passed ahead of the enemy, raked her, and resumed her original position. It was now obvious that the Wasp had greatly the advantage in the combat, and Captain Jones thought the contest might be speedily directed by boarding, but hesitated because the roughness of the sea might endanger the safety of both vessels if brought in contact. As, however, the braces and rigging of the Wasp was so injured by the shot of the enemy that he was fearful his masts being unsupported, would go by the board, and that the enemy might escape. He, therefore, determined at all hazards to board and thus decide the contest. With this determination he wore ship, run athwart the enemy's bow, so that the jibboom came in between the main and mizzen rigging of the Wasp. The enemy being in a position so inviting for a raking broadside that one was promptly ordered. So closely in contact were the contending vessels that while loading, the rammers of the Wasp struck against the sides of the opposing vessel, so that two of the guns of the former entered through the bow of ports of the latter and swept the whole length of the deck. At this juncture a sprightly and gallant seaman, named Jack Lang, who had once been impressed on board a British man of war, jumped on a gun with his cutlass, and was about to leap on board the enemy, when Captain Jones ordered him back, wishing to give a closing broadside before boarding. His impetuosity, however, could not be restrained, and observing the ardour of the crew generally, Lieutenant Biddle and Booth gallantly led them on, but to their great surprise when they reached the enemy's deck not a single



The Wasp and Frolic.









uninjured individual was found on deck except the seaman at the wheel, and three officers. The deck was covered with the dying and dead, and was slippery with blood. When Lieutenant Biddle reached the quarterdeck, the commander and two other officers, threw down their swords, and made an inclination of their bodies, thus affording evidence that they had surrendered.

During the early part of the action the ensign of the enemy had been shot down, upon which a British seaman carried it aloft again and nailed it to the mast. In this state it continued floating, they not being able to lower it until one of the United States officers ascended the rigging and tore it from its attachments. In forty-three minutes from the commencement of the action, full possession was taken of the enemy, which proved to be his *Brittanie* Majesty's sloop of war *Frolic*, commanded by Captain Whynyates.

On examining the birthdeck, it was found crowded with the dead and wounded, there being but an inconsiderable proportion of the crew of the *Frolic* which had escaped unhurt. Soon after Lieutenant Biddle took possession of the enemy, her masts fell by the board, so that she lay a complete wreck. The contest being now terminated, Captain Jones ordered Dr. New, the assistant surgeon of the *Wasp*, to visit the wounded enemy, and to carry with him every thing on board, which could in any manner contribute to their comfort.

The force of the *Frolic* consisted of sixteen thirty-two pound carronades, four twelve pounders on the maindeck, and two twelve pound carronades. She



was, therefore, superior to the *Wasp*, by four twelve pounders. The officers of the *Frolic* stated that the number of men on the ship's books was one hundred and ten ; but, as boats were seen plying between the *Frolic* and some of the convoy, in the morning, before the action, it was believed that she received many volunteers in addition to her regular crew. This belief was strengthened by the circumstance, that one of the vessels in the convoy, came alongside the *Wasp* next morning after her capture, and asked assistance to reef his sails, as he had but two men and a boy on board. It was intimated that he had thus diminished his crew by allowing volunteers to go on board the *Frolic*.

The officers, seamen, marines, and boys on board the *Wasp*, numbered one hundred and thirty-five ; which, from the best information which could be obtained, was less in number than that of the enemy. Both vessels, however, had more men than was essential to their efficiency ; and the officers of the *Frolic* candidly acknowledged, that they had more men than they knew what to do with. It appears, therefore, that while there was an equality of strength in the crews, there was an inequality in the number of guns and weight of metal—the *Frolic* having four twelve pounders more than the *Wasp*.

The exact number of killed and wounded on board the *Frolic* could not be ascertained with any degree of precision ; but, from the admissions of the British officers, it was supposed that the number killed was about thirty, including two officers ; and of those wounded, between forty and fifty. The captain and



every other officer on board were more or less severely wounded. The Wasp sustained a loss of only five men killed, and five wounded.

A busy scene now ensued, in disposing of the dead, taking care of the wounded, and repairing the damages which the Wasp sustained during the conflict. Lieutenant Biddle, with a portion of the officers and crew of the Wasp were similarly engaged on board the Frolic. While engaged in erecting jurmasts on board the latter vessel, a suspicious sail was seen to windward, upon which Captain Jones directed Lieutenant Biddle to shape her course for Charleston, or any other southern port of the United, while the Wasp would continue her cruise.

The strange sail coming down rapidly, both vessels prepared for action, but soon discovered, to the mortification of the victors of this well fought action, that the new enemy was a seventy-four, which proved to be the Poitiers, commanded by Commodore Beresford. Firing a shot over the Frolic, passed her, and soon overhauled the Wasp, which, in her crippled state, was unable to escape. Both vessels were thus captured, and carried into Bermuda. Captain Jones and his officers were placed on parole of honour at St. George's, Bermuda, and were treated there with great courtesy, particularly by the officers of the ninety-eighth and one hundred and second regiments of British infantry. Dinners, balls, and other acts of civility were tendered with a cordiality of manner which made our officers almost forget their misfortunes.

After remaining in St. George's a few weeks, a cartel was prepared by which the officers and crew



of the *Wasp* were conveyed to New York. On the return of Captain Jones to the United States, he was every where received with demonstrations of the highest respect and admiration for the skill and gallantry which he displayed in his combat with the enemy. In his journey to Washington, whither he was ordered by the President of the United States, he received brilliant entertainments in the cities through which he passed.

The legislature of Delaware—his native state—gave to him a vote of thanks, and an elegant piece of plate, with appropriate engravings. On motion of James A. Bayard, of Delaware, the Congress of the United States appropriated twenty-five thousand dollars, as a compensation to Captain Jones, his officers, and crew, for the loss they sustained by the recapture of the *Frolic*. They also voted a gold medal to Captain Jones, and a silver medal to each of his commissioned officers. The plate accompanying this memoir is a fac similitude, ruled from the medal.

As a farther evidence of the confidence of government, Captain Jones was ordered to take command of the frigate *Macedonian*, a vessel recently captured from the British by the gallant *Decatur*. She was rapidly fitted out under his direction in the harbour of New York, and was destined to be one of *Decatur's* squadron, and which was about to sail on another cruise.

In May 1811, the squadron attempted to put to sea, but, in sailing up Long Island Sound, encountered a large British squadron, which obliged the United States' vessels to retreat into the harbour of New London. In this situation the enemy continued an



uninterrupted blockade during the war. Finding it impossible to avoid the vigilance of Sir Thomas Hardy, who commanded the blockading squadron, the government ordered Captain Jones to proceed with his officers and crew to Sackett's harbour, and report to Commodore Chauncey, as commander of the frigate Mohawk, destined to cruise as one of the squadron on lake Ontario. The United States squadron maintained an ascendancy, and continued to cruise until October, when the British squadron, under the command of Sir James Yeo, left Kingston Harbour with a greatly superior force, which obliged the United States squadron to return to Sackett's harbour. It seemed, indeed, that the contest now depended on the exertions of the ship carpenters. Two line of battle ships were placed on the stocks, and were advancing rapidly to completion, when, in February 1815, the news of peace arrived, with orders to suspend further operations on these vessels.

A few weeks after peace was announced, Captain Jones with his officers and crew was ordered to repair forthwith to the the seaboard, and again to take command of the frigate Macedonian, which was directed to form part of the squadron destined to cruise against the Algerine men of war, then depredating on our commerce in the Mediterranean. So soon as the Algerine Regency was informed that war existed between the United States, and Great Britain, the Dey sent out his crusiers to capture all American merchant vessels. To punish these faithless freebooters, and to redress the wrongs of our merchants, a squadron consisting of nine or ten vessels was



fitted out and placed under the command of Commodore Decatur.

This armament sailed from New York in May 1815, and when off Cadiz, was informed that the Algerine force was cruising along the southern coast of Spain.

Two days after reaching the Mediterranean the United States squadron fell in with and captured the Algerine frigate *Messuado* mounting forty-six guns, and the next day captured a large brig of war both of which were carried into the port of Carthage, in Spain.

The American squadron then proceeded to the bay of Algiers, the sudden and unexpected appearance of which excited no slight degree of surprise and alarm in the Regency. When the Dey learned that his admiral had been killed, and his two principal vessels of war had been captured, his alarm became greatly augmented. With mingled feelings of trepidation and rage, he sent for the British consul, and reproached him with practising a deception on him. "You told me," he remarked, "that in a few months after the declaration of war, the British fleets would sweep from the ocean, every vessel belonging to the United States. Now, peace is restored, and, so far from your declaration proving true, here is a large squadron, augmented in size by three vessels captured from your own boasting nation."

The captured vessels to which the Dey alluded, consisted of the frigates *Guerriere*, *Macedonian*, and brig of war *Epervier*, which then actually formed a part of Decatur's squadron. Under these feelings



the Dey reluctantly yielded to every demand which was made on him ; which was to restore the value of the property belonging to American merchants which he had seized, to release all prisoners which he had captured, to relinquish forever all claims on the annual tribute which he had hitherto received.

After having thus successfully terminated the war with Algiers, and formed an advantageous treaty, the squadron proceeded to the other Barbary capitals, and there adjusted some minor difficulties, which, however, were of some importance to American merchants. After touching at several of the islands in the Mediterranean, at Naples, and at Malaga, in Spain, the squadron reached Gibraltar towards the last of October. After remaining at this port a few days, and exchanging civilities with the military authorities of the station, the squadron returned to the United States, early in December.

From this period to the present, no event of stirring importance has distinguished the career of Commodore Jones. He has been, however, almost constantly employed in various responsible positions, thus evincing the perfect confidence which his government placed in his talents and discretion.

In 1821, he took command of a squadron, in which he continued for three years, for the protection of our commerce in the Mediterranean. On his return he was offered a seat in the Board of Navy Commissioners, but, finding his bureau duties rather irksome to him, he accepted, in the year 1826, the command of a squadron destined for the protection of the American commerce in the Pacific ocean, which also continued for a period of three years. On his return

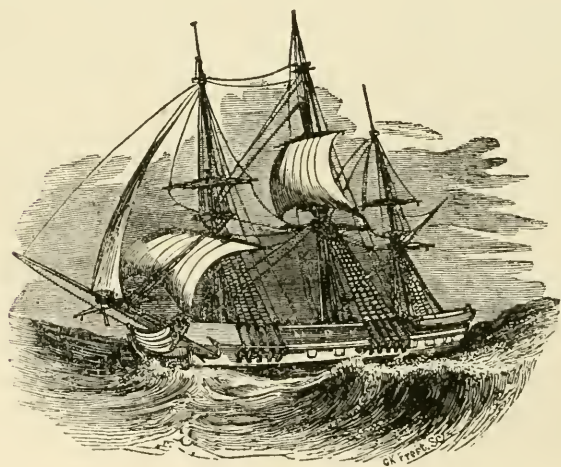


from the Pacific ocean, he was ordered to the command of the Baltimore station, where he continued with the exception of a short interval, until transferred to his present position as port captain of the harbour of New York.

Either on shore or afloat, his commands were distinguished as well for efficiency, as for the harmony which always prevailed among his officers. His calm dignity, high sense of justice, and gentlemanlike bearing, inspired universal respect.

Cheerful and fond of social life, he took great pleasure in having his officers around him, yet none of them ever felt disposed to take a liberty with him.

Commodore Jones has had always a repugnance to writing, yet there are but few gentlemen in any walk in life, more intimately acquainted with general literature. Choice in his language—a vigorous and original thinker, his conversation is always instructive and interesting.







JAMES LAWRENCE.



EATH, which so often removes from the scenes of their glory the young and heroic, has never triumphed over a victim more beloved and lamented by the nation he served than the subject of this memoir. His career was marked by a series of brilliant actions which had attracted the highest confidence and hope in his compatriots, and his untimely loss was mourned as a national calamity.



CAPTAIN JAMES LAWRENCE was born on the 1st of October, 1781, at Burlington, in New Jersey, and was the youngest son of John Lawrence, Esq., counsellor at law of that place. Soon after his birth he had the misfortune to lose his mother, and the care of his early years devolved on his two sisters, who seem to have cultivated the moral qualities of his heart with singular success.

At the age of twelve, he evinced a strong partiality for the sea; but his father disapproving of that plan of life, and wishing him to pursue the profession of law, young Lawrence acquiesced, and passed with reputation through the grammar school at Burlington, when, finding that the pecuniary situation of his father would not furnish him with the means of completing his education at any college or university, he commenced the study of law with his brother, the late John Lawrence, Esq., at Woodbury. He was now only thirteen years of age, a period of life when the grave pursuits of jurisprudence can scarcely be presumed to have many attractions for a young and ardent fancy, already inflamed with the love of wandering. He continued, however, a reluctant student for about two years, when the death of his father leaving him more at liberty to pursue his favourite inclination, he prevailed on his brother to place him under the care of Mr. Griscomb, at Burlington, for the purpose of studying navigation. He here remained for three months, at the expiration of which time, on application to the Navy Department, he received a warrant as midshipman, on the 4th of September, 1798.

His first voyage was in the ship *Ganges*, Captain



Tingey, on a cruise to the West Indies. He afterwards sailed in different vessels for upwards of two years, and was then made an acting lieutenant on board the frigate *Adams*, Captain Robinson, where he continued till the reduction of the navy; in consequence of which his appointment was not confirmed, and he remained in the rank of midshipman.

On the commencement of the war with Tripoli, in 1801, he was promoted to a lieutenancy, and sailed to the Mediterranean as first lieutenant of the schooner *Enterprise*, in 1803.

While in this situation, he bore a conspicuous part in an adventure of singular boldness, the destruction of the frigate *Philadelphia*. As we have referred to this affair (in which he was Decatur's second in command,) in the *Life of Commodore Preble*, and shall give a particular account of it, with an engraving, in the *Life of Commodore Decatur*, we pass it over here, remarking only, that when Decatur was promoted for his conduct on this occasion, Lawrence and the other officers and crew were voted two months' extra pay, which he declined receiving.

During the same year, when Commodore Preble bombarded the town of Tripoli, the *Enterprise*, with the other ships of the squadron, were employed to cover the boats during the attack. On this occasion, Lieutenant Lawrence had the temporary command of the *Enterprise*, and performed his service in so gallant and seaman-like a manner, as to receive the thanks of Commodore Preble.

From the *Enterprise*, he was transferred to the frigate *John Adams*, as first Lieutenant; and, after remaining in the Mediterranean about three years,



he returned with Commodore Preble to the United States.

Soon after, he was again sent to the Mediterranean as commander of gunboat No. 6. These vessels were originally destined to serve merely along the American coast, and, however qualified for harbour or river defence, were deemed exceedingly insecure in crossing the Atlantic. Being very small, with a disproportionably large gun, and necessarily laden very deeply, they laboured under every disadvantage in encountering heavy gales. So decided were the opinions of the naval officers against them, that no one would, perhaps, have been willing to risk his life in them on such a voyage, for any motive of private advantage, or from any consideration, except the performance of his duty. "Lawrence has told me," writes one of his brother officers, "that when he went on board the gunboat, he had not the faintest idea that he would ever arrive out to the Mediterranean in her, or, indeed, arrive any where else. He has also told me, that on the coast of Europe he met an English frigate, the captain of which would not at first believe that he had crossed the Atlantic in such a vessel." He did not, however, go with less alacrity, and he unexpectedly arrived safely in the Mediterranean, where he remained about sixteen months.

On his return from the Mediterranean, after the peace with Tripoli, he was appointed first lieutenant of the frigate *Constitution*, and afterwards commanded the schooner *Vixen*, the sloop of war *Wasp*, the brig *Argus*, and the ship *Hornet*, with the rank of master and commander, and was twice sent to Europe with despatches to our ministers. In the year 1808, he



married a daughter of Mr. Montaudevert, a respectable merchant of New York.

The declaration of war against Great Britain, in June 1812, gave a new impulse, or rather a new existence to the navy. Lawrence was at that time in New York, in command of the *Hornet*, and, in a few days, sailed with a squadron, consisting of the *United States*, *Congress*, and *Argus*, under the command of Commodore Rogers, in the *President*. Their object was to intercept the Jamaica fleet. After being detained for a day by the pursuit of the British frigate *Belvidere*, which ended in the escape of the latter, owing to her having the advantage of the wind, the squadron followed the fleet with the utmost alacrity, as well as the imperfect information of the vessels they met would permit, till the 13th of July, when they reached within eighteen or twenty hours' sail of the English channel. Disappointed in this chase, they ran now down near the Azores, thence back by the banks of Newfoundland to Boston, where they arrived on the 31st of August. Although this cruise was marked by no bold or prominent success, and although the squadron made only seven captures and a single recapture, yet the failure is attributable to fortune only. At a moment when the British navy, with its boasted ubiquity covered the ocean, this little band of adventurers sought their enemies in every quarter, dared them on their own coast, and, after carrying alarm through the mercantile classes of England, returned, unmolested, and not victorious, only because the single enemy they encountered sought safety in flight.

The day before the squadron entered Boston,



Captain Hull arrived after the capture of the *Guerriere*, and soon afterwards, the Government, yielding too far to the universal and natural enthusiasm excited by this gallant action, promoted Lieutenant Morris, the first officer of the *Constitution*, to the rank of captain. As this appointment, however, advanced him two grades at once, contrary to the ordinary rules of promotion, and thus placed him above all the masters and commanders in the navy, it occasioned much dissatisfaction among them. Captain Lawrence felt himself peculiarly injured by it; inasmuch as he found himself thus suddenly outranked by one so much his junior. He, therefore, addressed a letter to the Secretary of the Navy, in which, after rendering the most ample justice to the merits of Lieutenant Morris, he remonstrated in mild and firm, but respectful language, against so unprecedented a promotion, by which he would be forced to leave the navy. In reply to this fair and manly letter, he received from the Secretary of the Navy, a short and contemptuous answer, merely acknowledging the receipt of his letter, with an intimation that if he chose to leave the service without a cause, there would still remain heroes and patriots to support the honour of the flag. This sarcastic note Lawrence received as he was on the point of sailing from Boston. To have left the service instantly would have been the natural impulse of his wounded feelings, but, at such a moment, with a fine ship and a gallant crew, with sails unbent to meet the enemy, he could not part with the high hopes of acquiring reputation. He therefore, repressed his indignation, and, in reply to the Secretary, after stating his surprise and regret,



that any thing which he had written should have been deemed indecorous, he apprised him that he had prepared a memorial on the subject to the Senate of the United States, and should be governed by their decision. This example may be serviceable to many officers, who, in a moment of disappointment, at improper or unkind treatment, are tempted to resign. It is better—like Lawrence—to stifle, for a time, the natural but hasty resentment of wounded pride, till an opportunity offers of proving—not by our complaints, but our actions—that we have been unjustly neglected. Lawrence sailed under the galling impression of having been keenly wounded by the Secretary of the Navy, and seeing a junior placed over him. On his return, he found that secretary no longer in office, and himself promoted, in consequence of his application to the Senate, to the rank of captain, so as to outrank the officer whose well-deserved, though irregular appointment had given him so much uneasiness.

He now sailed from Boston in the *Hornet*, in company with Commodore Bainbridge, of the frigate *Constitution*, on a cruise to the East Indies ; but, in running down the coast of the Brazils, in the month of December, they found the *Bonne Citoyenne*, a British ship of war, loaded with specie, lying in the port of St. Salvador. The *Bonne Citoyenne*, was a larger vessel, and had a greater force both in guns and men than the *Hornet* ; but so eager was Lawrence to engage her, that he sent through the American consul at St. Salvador, a challenge to her commander, Captain Greene. “I request you to state to him,” said he, “that I will meet him whenever he may be



pleased to come out, and pledge my honour, that neither the Constitution, nor any other American vessel shall interfere." Commodore Bainbridge, at the same time, declared, "if Captain Greene wished to try equal force, I pledge my honour to give him an opportunity by being out of the way or not interfering." Whatever might have been the motive of Captain Greene, he adroitly evaded this offer by answering, that "although nothing would give him more satisfaction than to meet Captain Lawrence under different circumstances, and although he was convinced that the result of such an encounter could not remain long undecided in his own favour, yet he was equally convinced that Commodore Bainbridge knew too well the paramount duty he owed to his country, to remain an inactive spectator, while a ship of his own squadron fell into the hands of the enemy, and that he could not expose the Bonne Citoyenne to a risk so manifestly disadvantageous." To give Captain Greene perfect security against his interference, Commodore Bainbridge left St. Salvador for four days, during which Captain Greene might perceive that the Constitution was not within forty miles distance, and Captain Lawrence lay before the port in defiance. Still the Bonne Citoyenne did not move from her anchorage. Commodore Bainbridge then went into St. Salvador, and remained three days, supposing that the English officer would apply to the governor, as he might have done, and detain the Constitution for twenty-four hours, and thus ensure a fair engagement with Captain Lawrence; but he continued inflexible. Despairing at last of tempting him out, Commodore Bainbridge sailed from St. Salvador, and



Captain Lawrence remained blockading the Bonne Citoyenne, and an armed schooner of twelve guns, till the 24th of January, 1813, when the arrival of the Montague, a seventy-four gun ship, which had sailed from Rio Janeiro for the express purpose of relieving the blockaded ships, compelled him to retreat.

The whole conduct of Captain Lawrence on this occasion, reflects as much honour on the American arms as the most brilliant victory could have done. The propriety of private challenges, during war, may, generally speaking, be questionable. They may convert national into personal quarrels, and blood may be sometimes uselessly sacrificed to fastidious or frivolous points of honour. But in no case could they have ever been more completely justified than in the present.

At the commencement of the war, so totally unequal was the contest—so overwhelming the force of the enemy, that our navy could hope to gain nothing but glory in the struggle. It became, therefore a point of honour among our officers—the point on which the whole controversy rested, to prove that although they might be crushed, they would at least fall with honour; that to build a numerous fleet was the work of government; but to make a gallant and disciplined ship, depended on the officers; and that although the American ships should be overpowered by numbers, they were superior to any single adversary of equal strength. And what could more decisively and gloriously establish this superiority than the conduct of Captain Lawrence? In a single American sloop of war he blockades for nearly a month, with every token of defiance, two British ships, one of them his



superior in force, till a seventy-four is sent for to raise the blockade, and what rendered it peculiarly mortifying to the English, all this was done before the eyes of the astonished Portuguese, who had till now been taught by their haughty friends, that no equal vessel had ever pursued an English flag.

From St. Salvador Captain Lawrence now shaped his course towards Pernambuco. On the 10th of February, he captured the English brig *Resolution*, of ten guns, laden with provisions and about twenty-five thousand dollars in specie, but, as she was a dull sailer, and he could not spare hands to man her, he took out the money and the crew, and burnt her. He then ran down the coast for Maranham, and, after cruising near that place and Surinam, till the 23d of February, he stood for Demarara. On the next morning, he discovered a brig to leeward, and chased her so near the shore that he was obliged to haul off for want of a pilot. During the chase, however, he had discovered a vessel at anchor outside of the bar of Demarara river, with English colours flying, and now began beating round the Corobano bank to get at her; when, between three and four o'clock in the afternoon, another sail was seen on his weather quarter, edging down for him. As she approached, she hoisted English colours, and proved to be the British brig *Peacock*, Captain Peake. The *Hornet* was immediately cleared for action, and kept close to the wind, in order to get the weather guage of the approaching vessel. At ten minutes past five, finding that he could weather the enemy, Captain Lawrence hoisted American colours, tacked, and, in about a quarter of an hour, passed the British ship within half pistol-









The Peacock sunk by the Hornet.



shot, and exchanged broadsides. The enemy was now in the act of wearing, when Captain Lawrence bore up, received his starboard broadside, and ran him close on board on the starboard quarter; from which position he kept up so close and bloody a fire, that in less than fifteen minutes from the commencement of the action, the British struck their colours, and hoisted a signal of distress. Lieutenant Shubrick instantly went on board, and found that she was cut to pieces, her captain killed, many of the crew killed and wounded, her mainmast gone by the board, six feet water in the hold and sinking very fast. The two ships were immediately brought to anchor, and the Hornet's boats despatched to bring off the wounded; but, although her guns were thrown overboard, the shot holes which could be got at plugged, and every exertion made by pumping and bailing to keep her afloat, so completely had she been shattered that she sunk before the prisoners could be removed, carrying down thirteen of her crew, as well as three men belonging to the Hornet. Lieutenant Connor and the other officers and men employed in removing the prisoners, narrowly escaped by jumping into a boat, as the Peacock went down; and four seamen of the Hornet ran up into the foretop at the same time, and were taken off by the boats.

The Peacock was deemed one of the finest ships of her class in the British navy. In size she was about equal to the Hornet; but, in guns and men, the Hornet was somewhat, though very little, her superior; and by no means so much so, as to give her any decided advantage. The loss on board the Peacock could not be precisely ascertained. Captain Peake



was twice wounded, the second time mortally. Four men were found dead on board. The master and thirty-two others were wounded, three of whom afterwards died. The *Hornet* had only one man killed, and two slightly wounded. Her rigging and sails were much cut, but her hull received very little injury. During the engagement, the vessel which the *Hornet* had been endeavouring to reach before the *Peacock* bore down, lay at anchor within six miles, and as she was a brig—the *Espiegle*—carrying fifteen thirty-two pound carronades and two long nines, it was supposed that she would attack the *Hornet*, after the latter had been disabled by the combat. The *Hornet* was immediately prepared to receive her, and, by nine o'clock at night, her boats were stowed, a new set of sails bent, and every thing ready for action. She, however, declined coming out. The next morning, Captain Lawrence found that he had two hundred and seventy souls on board the *Hornet*, and, as his crew had for some time been on short allowance, resolved to steer for the United States. The officers of the *Peacock* received from those of the *Hornet* the most humane and honourable treatment; so penetrated with gratitude were they for the kindness which they had experienced, that they could not restrain the expression of their feelings till they reached England, but, on their arrival in the United States, published a letter of thanks to Captain Lawrence and his officers, in which they declared that such was the liberality displayed to them, that “they ceased to consider themselves prisoners.” Nor was the rough generosity of the *Hornet*’s crew less honourable. As the sailors of the *Peacock* had lost every thing except



what they had on their backs, when she went down, the crew of the *Hornet* united to relieve them; and made every English sailor a present of two shirts and a blue jacket and pair of trowsers; a true-hearted liberality, which raises them in our estimation higher than even their victory.

Captain Lawrence returned to New York in safety, and, besides the applause which his country lavished upon him for his good conduct, had the satisfaction of learning, as we have already observed, that he had been promoted during his absence, and his rank settled to his perfect satisfaction. Soon after his return he was ordered to the command of the frigate *Constitution*, with the temporary superintendence of the navy yard at New York. But the next day, to his great regret, he received instructions to repair to Boston, and take command of the *Chesapeake* frigate, then nearly ready for sea. This appointment was peculiarly unpleasant, because the *Chesapeake* was not only considered as one of the very worst ships in the navy, but, in consequence of her disgrace in the rencontre with the *Leopard*, laboured under that dispiriting stigma among sailors, of being an "unlucky ship." These circumstances, combined with the state of his family, made Captain Lawrence unwilling to go to sea immediately, and he, therefore, requested to retain his situation in the *Hornet*. Disappointed in this wish, he then took command of the *Chesapeake*, at Boston, where he had been but a short time, when the British frigate *Shannon*, Captain Broke, appeared before the harbour, for the avowed purpose of seeking a combat with the *Chesapeake*. Stung with the repeated disasters of the British frigates, this officer



resolved to make an effort to retrieve them; and, when he deemed his ship perfectly prepared for that purpose, sent a formal challenge to Captain Lawrence.

“As the Chesapeake”—his letter began—“appears now ready for sea, I request you will do me the favour to meet the Shannon with her, ship to ship, to try the fortune of our respective flags. To an officer of your character, it requires some apology for proceeding to further particulars. Be assured, sir, that it is not from any doubt I entertain of your wishing to close with my proposal, but merely to provide an answer to any objection that might be made—and reasonably—upon the chance of our receiving support.” After observing that Commodore Boscawen had not accepted several verbal challenges which he had given, Captain Broke then proceeds to state very minutely the force of the Shannon, and offers to send all British ships out of reach, so that they might have a fair combat, at any place within a certain range along the coast of New England, which he specified; if more agreeable, he offers to sail together, and to warn the Chesapeake, by means of private signals of the approach of British ships of war, till they reach some solitary spot—or to sail with a flag of truce to any place out of the reach of British aid, so that the flag should be hauled down when it was deemed fair to begin hostilities. “I entreat you, sir,” he concludes, “not to imagine that I am urged by mere personal vanity to the wish of meeting the Chesapeake, or that I depend only upon your personal ambition for your acceding to this invitation. We have both nobler motives. You will feel it as a compliment, if I say that the result of our



meeting may be the most grateful service I can render to my country ; and I doubt not that you, equally confident of success, will feel convinced that it is only by repeated triumphs in even combats, that your little navy can now hope to console your country for the loss of that trade it can no longer protect."

The style of this letter, with the exception of the puerile bravado about Commodore Rodgers, is frank and manly ; and, if the force of the Shannon were correctly stated, would be such a challenge as might well be sent from a brave seaman to a gallant adversary. We, however, are but two well satisfied, that Captain Broke studiously underrated the number of his guns and crew ; or that, after his challenge, he must have received additions to both. That the Shannon had more guns than the number stated by her commander, we learn from the testimony of the surviving officers of the Chesapeake ; who also assert, that she had three hundred and seventy-six men ; that she had an officer and sixteen men from the Belle Poule ; and that the hats of some of her seamen were marked "Tenedos." Such as it was, however, this letter, most unfortunately, never reached Captain Lawrence. If he had received it—if he had been thus warned to prepare his ship—if he had had an opportunity of selecting his officers, and disciplining his crew—if, in short, he had been able to place the Chesapeake on any thing like equal terms with the Shannon, the combat might have been more bloody—there might have been such an engagement as has not yet been seen between single ships on the ocean ; though we cannot suffer ourselves to doubt the result of it. But he knew nothing of this challenge—he saw



only the Shannon riding before him in defiance; he remembered the spirit with which he himself had overawed a superior, and he could not brook for a moment, that an enemy, which seemed to be his equal, should insult his flag. Although, therefore, the Chesapeake was comparatively an inferior ship—although his first lieutenant was sick on shore—although three of his lieutenants had recently left her; and, of the four who remained, two were only midshipmen, acting as lieutenants—although part of his crew were new hands, and all of them had lost some of their discipline by staying in port—yet, as he would have gone to sea in that situation had no enemy appeared, he felt himself bound not to delay sailing on that account, and throwing himself, therefore, on his courage and his fortune, he determined at once to attack the enemy. It was on the morning of the 1st of June, 1813, that the Chesapeake sailed out of the harbour of Boston, to meet the Shannon. As soon as she got under weigh, Captain Lawrence called the crew together, and, having hoisted the white flag, with the motto of “free trade and sailors’ rights,” made a short address. His speech, however, was received with no enthusiasm—on the contrary, signs of dissatisfaction were evident; particularly from a boatswain’s mate, a Portuguese, who seemed to be at the head of the malcontents; and complaints were muttered, that they had not yet received their prize money. Such expressions, at the eve of an action, were but ill bodings of the result of it; but Captain Lawrence, ignorant as he was of the character of his sailors, and unwilling at such a moment to damp their spirits by harshness, preserved his accustomed calmness, and



had prize checks, at once, given by the purser to those who had not received them. While this scene was passing, the Shannon observing the Chesapeake coming out, bore away. The Chesapeake followed her till four o'clock, in the afternoon, when she hauled up and fired a gun, on which the Shannon hove to. They manœuvred for some time, till at about a quarter before six, they approached within pistol-shot, and exchanged broadsides.

These broadsides were both bloody; but the fire of the Shannon was most fortunate in the destruction of officers. The fourth lieutenant, Mr. Ballard, was mortally wounded—the sailing master was killed, and Captain Lawrence received a musket ball in his leg, which caused great pain, and profuse bleeding, but he leaned on the companion-way, and continued to order and to animate his crew. A second and a third broadside was exchanged, with evident advantage on the part of the Chesapeake; but, unfortunately, among those now wounded on board of her, was the first lieutenant, Mr. Ludlow, who was carried below—three men were successively shot from the helm, in about twelve minutes from the commencement of the action; and, as the hands were shifting, a shot disabled her foresail, so that she would no longer answer her helm, and her anchor caught in one of the afterports of the Shannon, which enabled the latter to rake her upperdeck. As soon as Lawrence perceived that she was falling to leeward, and that by the Shannon's filling she would fall on board, he called his boarders, and was giving orders about the foresail, when he received a musket ball in his body. The bugleman, who should have called



the boarders, did not do his duty ; and, at this moment, Commodore Broke, whose ship had suffered so much that he was preparing to repel boarding : perceiving, from this accident, how the deck of the Chesapeake was swept, jumped on board with about twenty men. They would have been instantly repelled ; but the captain, the first lieutenant, the sailing master, the boatswain, lieutenant of marines, the only acting lieutenant on the spardeck, were all killed or disabled. At the call of the boarders, Lieutenant Cox ran on deck, but just in time to receive his falling commander, and bear him below. Lieutenant Budd—the second lieutenant—led up the boarders, but only fifteen or twenty would follow him, and with these he defended the ship till he was wounded and disabled. Lieutenant Ludlow, wounded as he was, hurried upon deck, where he soon received a mortal cut from a sabre. The marines who were engaged fought with desperate courage ; but they were few in numbers ; too many of them having followed the Portuguese boatswain's mate, who exclaimed, it is said, as he skulked below, "so much for not paying men their prize money." Meanwhile the Shannon threw on board sixty additional men, who soon succeeded in overpowering the seamen of the Chesapeake, who had now no officers to lead or rally them, and took possession of the ship ; which was not, however, surrendered by any signal of submission ; but, became the enemy's, only because they were able to overwhelm all who were in a condition to resist.

As Captain Lawrence was carried below, he perceived the melancholy condition of the Chesapeake, but cried out, "Don't surrender the ship." He was



taken down in the wardroom, and, as he lay in excruciating pain, perceiving that the noise above had ceased, he ordered the surgeon to go on deck, and tell the officers to fight on to the last, and never strike the colours. "They shall wave," said he, "while I live." But it was too late to resist or to struggle longer; the enemy had already possession of the ship. As Captain Lawrence's wounds would not allow of his removal, he continued in the wardroom, surrounded by his wounded officers, and, after lingering in great pain for four days, during which his sufferings were too acute to permit him to speak, or, perhaps, to think of the sad events he had just witnessed, or do more than ask for what his situation required, he died on the 5th of June. His body was wrapped in the colours of the Chesapeake, and laid on the quarterdeck, until they arrived at Halifax, where he was buried with the highest military and naval honours; the British officers forgetting, for a moment, in their admiration of his character, that he had been but lately their enemy. His pall was supported by the oldest captains in the navy then at Halifax, and no demonstration of respectful attention was omitted to honour the remains of a brave, but unfortunate stranger.

Thus prematurely perished, at the age of thirty-two, this gallant and generous seaman. Lost, as he was, in the full vigour of his powers, and with the imperfect measure of his fame, our hopes are forbidden to dwell on the fond anticipation of what he might have been, and we are left to rest with a melancholy pleasure on the qualities which his short life had already developed. Lawrence seems to have



combined all the distinguished and endearing qualities ; the openness of heart, the manliness of pride, the benevolence of feeling, the chivalrous courage, which our imagination ascribes to the perfection of the naval character. He was devoted to his profession, and to the service. During nearly sixteen years which he spent in the navy, he never had a furlough, except one for about six weeks. The perfect order of his ship bore testimony to his merits as a disciplinarian, while the zealous attachment of his crew, proved that his discipline had not been earned by harshness or severity. His courage was of a daring and desperate cast, but it was still regulated by a calm sobriety of judgment. Indeed, the characteristic quality of Lawrence—that which most distinguished him as an officer, was coolness and perfect self-possession in the midst of danger. Of his kindness, of the warmth and generosity of his heart, which rendered him, emphatically, a favourite of the navy, his brother officers are all willing witnesses. These remembrances are, however, most cherished, where they are now most consolatory—in the bosom of his family ; of the two widowed sisters, whose cares, during his infancy, he repaid with the kindest protection ; of his afflicted wife, who, with three children—the youngest born since his father's death—is left to lament a loss, which the sympathy of her country may, in some degree, we trust, alleviate.

In this sanguinary engagement the destruction was nearly equal on both sides. The Chesapeake lost her commander and forty-seven men killed, and ninety-seven wounded, of whom fourteen afterwards died. Among these were Lieutenant Ludlow, first



lieutenant of the ship, and Lieutenant Ballard, the fourth lieutenant, both excellent officers.

On the part of the Shannon, Captain Broke was dangerously wounded, though he has since recovered; the first lieutenant, the purser, captain's clerk, and twenty-three seamen killed, and fifty-seven persons wounded, besides Captain Broke.

The capture of the Chesapeake is to be ascribed wholly to the extraordinary loss of officers, (a loss without any precedent, as far as we can recollect, in naval history;) and to her falling accidentally on board the Shannon. During the three broadsides, while the officers of the Chesapeake were living, and she was kept clear of the enemy, the superiority was manifestly with the Americans. The Chesapeake had received scarcely any damage, while the Shannon had several shot between wind and water, and could with difficulty be kept afloat during the succeeding night. It was only when accident threw the Chesapeake on board the Shannon, when her officers were unable to lead on the boarders, that Captain Broke himself—contrary, we believe, to the regulations of the British navy—left his own ship, and was able, by superior numbers, to overpower the distracted crew of the Chesapeake.

We have heard many accounts which we are very reluctantly compelled to believe, of improper conduct by the British after the capture, and of brutal violence offered to the crew of the Chesapeake. As, however, some allowances are due to the exasperated passions of the moment; something, too, to the confusion of a bloody and doubtful struggle, we are unwilling to



prolong the remembrance of imputations which may be disproved, and, perhaps, have been exaggerated.

But we should wrong the memory of Captain Lawrence—we should be unjust to the officers of the American navy, with whose glory all the aspiring ambition of the country is so closely blended—if we omitted any opportunity of giving the last and fairest lustre to their fame, by contrasting their conduct with that of the enemy ; or, if we forbore, from any misplaced delicacy towards our adversaries, to report circumstances connected with the fate of the Chesapeake, which throw a broad and dazzling light on the generous magnanimity of our countrymen.

When Captain Hull took the *Guerriere*, every chest, trunk, and box belonging to the officers, containing, it was known, the fruits of a long cruise, much of it against our own country, was delivered to them without examination. The very trifles which the crew of the *Constitution* saved from the *Guerriere*, before she was blown up, were scrupulously restored to the English sailors ; no article of private property was touched.

When Commodore Decatur took the *Macedonian*, he purchased from Captain Carden upwards of a thousand dollars worth of things in the ship, and Captain Carden was permitted to take the rest on shore. To such an extent was this kindness abused, that every knife and fork—every cup and saucer—every plate and dish—every chair and table—in short, every thing which Captain Carden had used, was taken on shore ; and, before the *Macedonian* reached New York, the prizemaster was obliged to send on



board the United States for the most common articles of daily use, as the prisoners had taken them all away. At the same time, the wardroom officers of the United States purchased their wine and other articles from the wardroom officers of the Macedonian.

When Commodore Bainbridge took the Java, all the property of all the officers and all the passengers, and the plate belonging to a high military commander, were restored instantly. The American officers would have deemed it disgraceful to retain the private property of a brother officer, even though he were an enemy and a prisoner.

When Captain Lawrence took the Peacock, and the officers and crew of that vessel were left destitute, the officers and crew of the Hornet fed and clothed them from their own stores.

When the Chesapeake was taken by the Shannon, the key of Captain Lawrence's storeroom was demanded of the purser. It was given; but the purser observed, at the same time, that in the captures of the Guerriere, Macedonian, and Java, the most scrupulous regard was paid to the private property of the British officers; that Captain Lawrence had laid in stores for a long cruise; and that the value of them would be a great object to his widow and family, for whose use he was desirous, if possible, of preserving them. This request was not merely declined—it was haughtily and superciliously refused.

Well, then—the enemy captured the Chesapeake—they enjoyed the little private property of Captain Lawrence; but they have not taken from him any of his individual fame, nor of his country's glory. However we may mourn the sufferings of that day,



the loss of the Chesapeake has not, in our estimation, varied the relative standing of the marine of the two countries; nor does it abate, in the slightest degree, any of the loftiness of our naval pretensions. The contest was wholly unequal in ships, in guns, in crews, in officers, in every thing.

The Shannon was a better ship; she had not upon her the curse of that ill-omened name, the Chesapeake. The Shannon was a stronger ship; she mounted twenty-eight eighteen pounders on the maindeck, twenty-two thirty-two pound carronades, and two long brass nines or twelves, on the spardeck, and a large carronade amidships, *in all fifty-two guns*, besides this last heavy carronade; while the Chesapeake mounted twenty-eight eighteen pounders on the maindeck, and twenty thirty-two pound carronades, and one eighteen pounder—chase gun—on the spardeck, *in all forty-nine guns*.

The Shannon had a better crew. Besides her complement she had seamen from two other ships. That crew, too, had been long at sea; long in the ship; were known; were tried; and, as Commodore Broke sent a challenge, were, of course, men in whom—if they were not picked for the occasion—he knew he could confide. The Chesapeake had, on the contrary, in part, a new crew, unknown to their officers, not yet knowing their places, or the ship. The ship had not been more than a few hours at sea, and the landsmen and the landswomen had been dismissed from her on the very day of the engagement. The officers, too, although we should be the last to detract from their merits, and although the manner in which they fought their ship does them the highest



honour, the officers were young and few in number, and had as yet scarcely any opportunity of disciplining or knowing their seamen; yet, under all these disadvantages, the great damage sustained by the *Shannon*, and the great loss of her crew, all of which took place before the boarding, warrant completely the opinion, that but for the accidental loss of officers, the victory would have been with the *Chesapeake*.

So far, indeed, from humbling our national pride, the stubbornness with which, in spite of its inequality, this combat was sustained, only confirms us in a belief, not created by the events of that war, though not likely to be much shaken by them—a belief formed on circumstances which even a series of naval losses cannot now control—a belief, too, in avowing which we are quite content to incur the charge of overweening national prejudice—that in all the qualities essential to success on the ocean, the American seamen are not equal, but superior to the British seamen. It is no merit of theirs. Nature and circumstances have made them so. But so it is—they are physically superior; they are morally superior. The warm and variable climate of the United States, has, to a certain degree, melted the original English constitution of our ancestors, till, instead of the broad shouldered and ruddy form of the people of Great Britain, the Americans are a thinner race of men, with less personal strength and stamina, but with more activity, more quickness, more alertness. The lower classes of people in this country, too, derive from their popular institutions more intelligence and education, they learn more, they learn easier, while the wider field for exertion, and the perfect freedom of employing



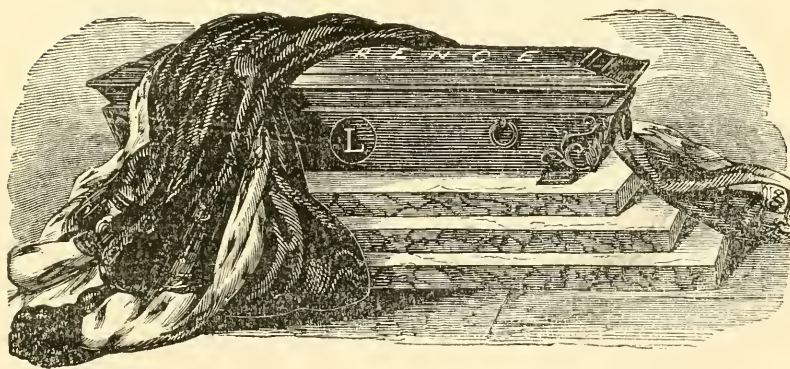
themselves in their own way, gives to the American character a certain play, and vigour, and animation not found in any other nation. The Americans, moreover, are generally younger men, more in the vigour of life. The state of our trade also renders our seamen more adventurous. They make longer voyages, in smaller ships, and brave more dangers than can be experienced in the regular and monopolised, and convoyed commerce of Great Britain. They, besides, enter into the service voluntarily, and for short periods, and their minds have more of the elasticity of freedom than the seamen entombed on board a British man of war. The effect which these circumstances might naturally be supposed to produce we have often seen. The Americans vanquished the English at sea again and again during the Revolution. In the war with France, the American squadrons were at least as active, as brave, and as vigilant against the enemy, as those of England. While the two navies were together in the Mediterranean, the superiority in ships, crews, and officers was, in the opinion of every stranger, decidedly with the Americans. How that pre-eminence was sustained in the recent war, need not be told. In short, the American seamen have always held that high rank on the ocean from which the casual loss of the Chesapeake, in an ill-matched combat, cannot degrade them, and which, we are sure, with the blessing of God, and a liberal policy from their country, they will always maintain.\*

Since the close of the war of 1812, the British historians have laboured hard to show that all the naval victories gained by the Americans, during that

\* Port Folio.



war, were the result of untoward accidents, or of a greatly superior force on our side. James, in his "Naval History," and Alison, in his recent "History of Europe," have distorted facts, and made wholly unfounded statements for this purpose. But the true state of the case was directly the reverse. Our victories were won by superior gunnery and superior discipline, and their only one, where single frigates were opposed, was clearly the result of untoward accidents. By a process of careful analogy, some of our own writers have shown the grounds on which we declare our victories to have been fairly won; and yet our late enemies pretend to cite American authority for accounts of these victories in which the national vanity of the British is grossly and systematically flattered at the expense of truth and justice.







ISAAC HULL.



ISAAC HULL was born in Derby, near New Haven, Connecticut, in the year 1775.

His career on the ocean commenced when he was a mere boy. At the age of twelve years he went on board a prize taken by his father from the British, during the Revolution. His early adventures in the merchant service were of a very romantic character. Before he entered the navy, he had made eighteen voyages to different parts of Europe and the West











Indies. He entered the navy, as lieutenant, on the 9th of March, 1798.

His first active service was in the war with the French Republic, during the administration of John Adams. It will be recollected that the operations of this war were confined chiefly to the extirpation of a species of vermin called French privateers from the West India seas, an exceedingly toilsome, but inglorious service. The most celebrated actions of the war are the two battles of Commodore Truxtun, in each of which he compelled a French frigate of superior force to strike. Hull, however, then first lieutenant of the frigate *Constitution*, under Commodore Talbot, was fortunate enough, in May, 1790, to obtain a separate command for a certain piece of service, which he achieved in a very brilliant style.

It having been ascertained that a French letter of marque, the *Sandwich*, was lying in Port Platte, St. Domingo, Commodore Talbot detached Mr. Hull, lieutenant of the *Constitution*, to reconnoitre in one of the frigate's cutters, and soon after finding the American sloop *Sally*, employed on the coast of the island, he threw a party of seamen and marines into her, under the command of Mr. Hull, who arrived off the port, with most of his men below, and so arranged matters, that no suspicion of his intention was excited. The *Sally* ran the *Sandwich* aboard, the party of Mr. Hull went into her, and carried her without the loss of a man. At the same moment, Captain Carmick landed with the marines, entered the Spanish battery, under whose protection the *Sandwich* was lying, and spiked the guns. The *Sandwich* was stripped to her girt-line, and every



thing was below. She was captured at midday, and, before sunset, she had her royal yards across, her guns sealed, her American crew quartered, and soon after she weighed, beat out of the harbour, and joined the frigate. Hull always considered this one of the most creditable of his achievements, and it is so regarded by the best judges of nautical exploits. It turned out, however, unfortunately for the Constitution's people; for the legality of the capture in a neutral port being questioned, not only was the Sandwich restored to her owners, but all the prize money of the cruise went to pay damages.\*

In the Tripolitan war of 1804, Hull's services were more important. It is well known that General Eaton, by taking up the cause of the deposed Bashaw of Tripoli, Hamet Caramalli, and assisting him to capture Derne, came so near overturning the government, and humbling the barbarians to our own terms, that he was only prevented from doing this by the precipitate treaty of Mr. Lear. It is not so well known that it was Hull who aided General Eaton in the most essential manner by furnishing funds, conveying him to Egypt, and, finally, by battering the town and fortifications, while Eaton and his allies were attacking it on the land side. The singularity of this affair—a body of Americans allied with Turks, attacking an African town by sea and land and capturing it—renders it one of the most romantic achievements in which Mr. Hull was ever engaged.

At the commencement of the war of 1812, Hull having been advanced in the meantime to the rank of

\* Cooper's Naval History.



captain, was placed in command of the frigate Constitution, in which he was destined to perform those brilliant actions which have rendered him one of the most celebrated heroes of our navy. His first exploit was the escape of the Constitution from a British squadron, which is justly regarded as one of the most remarkable recorded in naval history. The account of it contained in the official letter of Captain Hull has all the interest of a romance. It is as follows:—

*“ United States’ frigate Constitution, at Sea, July 21, 1812.*

SIR:—In pursuance of your orders of the 3d instant, I left Annapolis on the 5th instant, and the capes on the 12th, of which I advised you by the pilot who brought the ship to sea.

For several days after we got out, the wind was light and ahead, which, with a strong southerly current, prevented our making much way to the northward. On the 17th, at two, P. M., being in twenty-two fathoms water off Egg harbour, four sail of ships were discovered from the masthead, to the northward and in shore of us, apparently ships of war. The wind being very light all sail was made in chase of them, to ascertain whether they were the enemy’s ships, or our squadron having got out of New York, waiting the arrival of the Constitution, the latter of which I had reason to believe was the case.

At four, in the afternoon, a ship was seen from the masthead, bearing about N. E., standing for us under all sail, which she continued to do until sundown, at which time she was too far off to distinguish signals, and the ships in shore only to be seen from the tops; they were standing off to the southward and eastward. As we could not ascertain before dark what the ship in the offing was, I determined to stand for her, and get near enough to make the night signal.

At ten, in the evening, being within six or eight miles of the strange sail, the private signal was made, and kept up nearly one hour, but finding she could not answer it, I concluded she and the ships in shore were enemy.



I immediately hauled off to the southward and eastward, and made all sail, having determined to lie off till daylight to see what they were. The ship that we had been chasing hauled off after us, showing a light, and occasionally making signals, supposed to be for the ships in shore.

On the 18th, at daylight, or a little before it was quite light, saw two sail under our lee, which proved to be frigates of the enemy's. One frigate astern within about five or six miles, and a line of battle ship, a frigate, a brig, and schooner, about ten or twelve miles directly astern, all in chase of us, with a fine breeze, and coming up fast, it being nearly calm where we were. Soon after sunrise, the wind entirely left us and the ship would not steer, but fell round off with her head towards the two ships under our lee. The boats were instantly hoisted out, and sent ahead to tow the ship's head round, and to endeavour to get her farther from the enemy, being then within five miles of three heavy frigates. The boats of the enemy were got out and sent ahead to tow, by which, with the light air that remained with them, they came up very fast. Finding the enemy gaining on us, and but little chance of escaping from them, I ordered two of the guns on the gundeck to be ran out at the cabin windows for stern guns on the gundeck, and hoisted one of the twenty-four pounders off the gundeck, and run that, with the forecastle gun, an eighteen pounder, out at the ports on the quarterdeck, and cleared the ship for action, being determined they should not get her without resistance on our part, notwithstanding their force and the situation we were placed in.

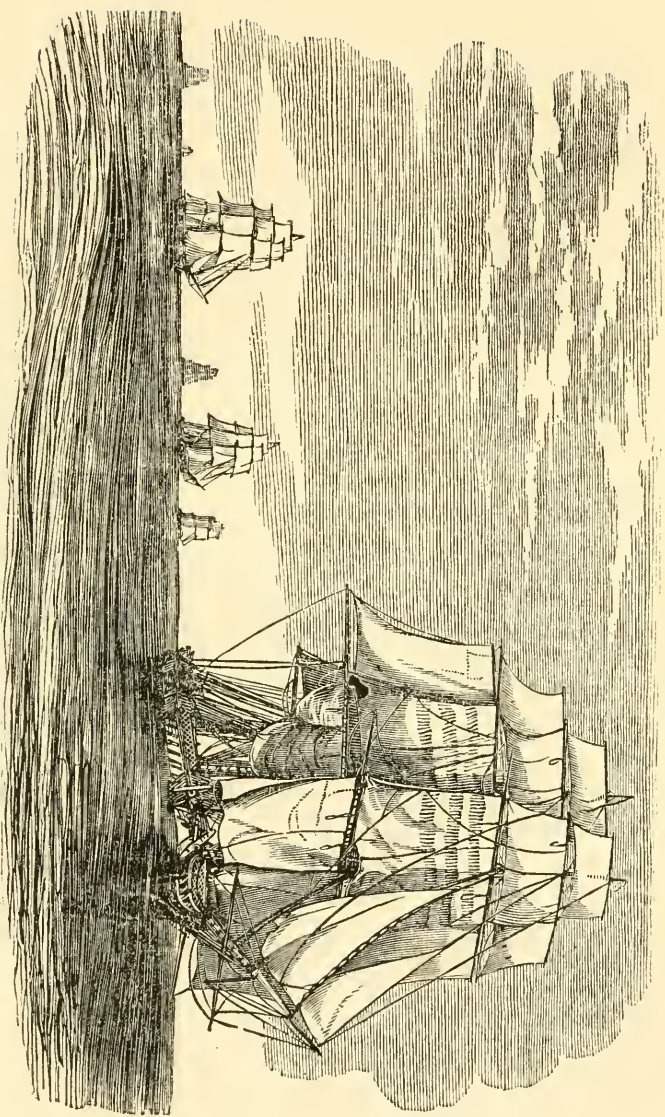
At about seven, in the morning, the ship nearest us approaching within gunshot, and directly astern, I ordered one of the stern guns fired, to see if we could reach her, to endeavour to disable her masts; found the shot fell a little short, would not fire any more.

At eight, four of the enemy's ships nearly within gunshot, some of them having six or eight boats ahead towing, with all their oars and sweeps out, to row them up with us, which they were fast doing. It now appeared that we must be taken, and that our escape was impossible—four heavy ships nearly within gunshot, and coming up fast, and not the least hope of a breeze to give us a chance of getting off by outsailing them.

In this situation, finding ourselves in only twenty-four fathoms



*Escape of the Constitution from a British Squadron.*









water, by the suggestion of that valuable officer, Lieutenant Morris, I determined to try and warp the ship ahead, by carrying out anchors and warping her up to them; three or four hundred fathoms of rope was instantly got up, and two anchors got ready and sent ahead, by which means we began to gain ahead of the enemy; they, however, soon saw our boats carrying out the anchors, and adopted the same plan, under very advantageous circumstances, as all the boats from the ships furthestmost off were sent to tow and warp up those nearest to us, by which means they again came up, so that at nine, the ship nearest us began to fire her bow guns, which we instantly returned by our stern guns in the cabin and on the quarterdeck. All the shot from the enemy fell short; but we have reason to believe that some of ours went on board her, as we could not see them strike the water. Soon after nine, a second frigate passed under our lee, and opened her broadside, but finding her shot fall short, discontinued her fire; but continued, as did all the rest of them, to make every possible exertion to get up with us. From nine to twelve, all hands were employed in warping the ship ahead, and in starting some of the water in the main hold to lighten her, which, with the help of a light air, we rather gained of the enemy, or, at least, held our own. About two, in the afternoon, all the boats from the line of battle ship and some of the frigates were sent to the frigate nearest to us, to endeavour to tow her up, but a light breeze sprung up, which enabled us to hold way with her, notwithstanding they had eight or ten boats ahead, and all her sails furled to tow her to windward. The wind continued light until eleven at night, and the boats were kept ahead towing and warping to keep out of the reach of the enemy, three of the frigates being very near us; at eleven, we got a light breeze from the southward, the boats came alongside and were hoisted up, the ship having too much way to keep them ahead, the enemy still in chase and very near.

On the 19th, at daylight passed within gunshot of one of the frigates, but she did not fire on us, perhaps, for fear of becalming her, as the wind was light; soon after passing us she tacked, and stood after us—at this time six sail were in sight, under all sail after us. At nine, in the morning, saw a strange sail on our weather beam, supposed to be an American merchant ship; the instant the frigate nearest us saw her, she hoisted American colours, as did all the



squadron, in hopes to decoy her down; I immediately hoisted the English colours, that she might not be deceived; she soon hauled her wind, and, it is to be hoped, made her escape. All this day the wind increased gradually, and we gained on the enemy, in the course of the day, six or eight miles; they, however, continued chasing us all night under a press of sail.

On the 20th, at daylight in the morning, only three of them could be seen from the masthead, the nearest of which was about twelve miles off, directly astern. All hands were set at work wetting the sails, from the royals down, with the engine and fire buckets, and we soon found that we left the enemy very fast. At a quarter past eight, the enemy finding that they were fast dropping astern, gave over chase, and hauled their wind to the northward, probably for the station off New York. At half past eight, saw a sail ahead, gave chase after her under all sail. At nine, saw another strange sail under our lee bow, we soon spoke the first sail discovered, and found her to be an American brig from St. Domingo, bound to Portland; I directed the captain how to steer to avoid the enemy, and made sail for the vessel to leeward; on coming up with her, she proved to be an American brig from St. Bartholomew's, bound to Philadelphia: but, on being informed of war, he bore up for Charleston, S. C. Finding the ship so far to the southward and eastward, and the enemy's squadron stationed off New York, which would make it impossible for the ship to get in there, I determined to make for Boston, to receive your farther orders, and I hope my having done so will meet your approbation. My wish to explain to you as clearly as possible why your orders have not been executed, and the length of time the enemy were in chase of us, with various other circumstances, have caused me to make this communication much longer than I could have wished, yet I cannot in justice to the brave officers and crew under my command, close it without expressing to you the confidence I have in them, and assuring you that their conduct while under the guns of the enemy was such as might have been expected from American officers and seamen. I have the honour to be, with very great respect, sir, your obedient humble servant,

(Signed)

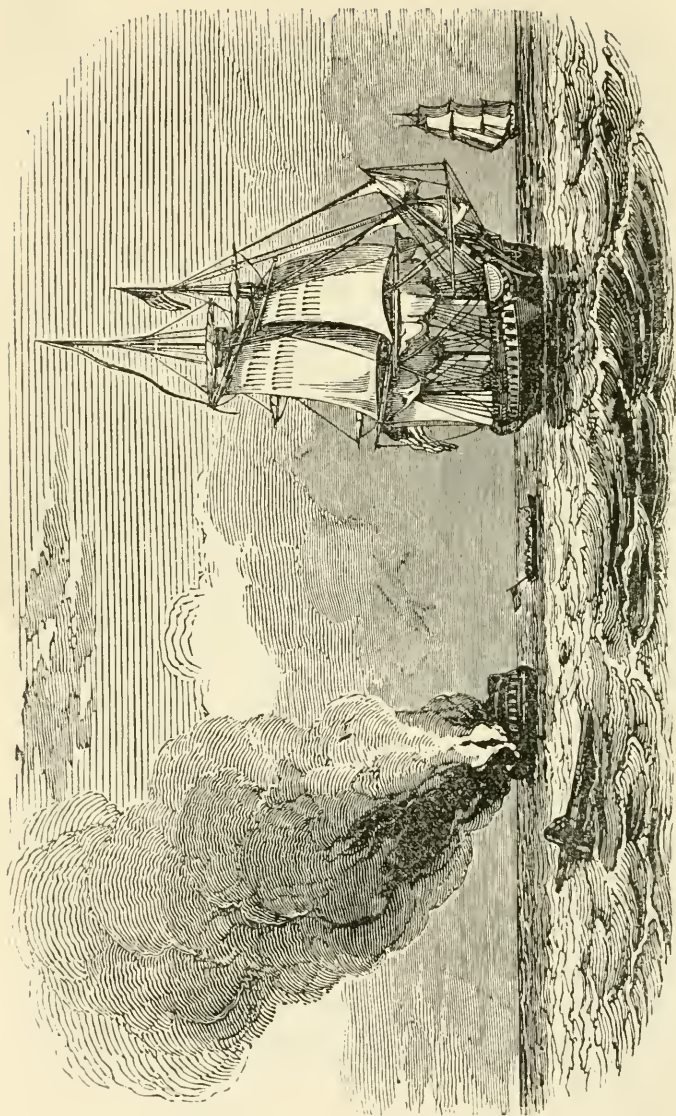
ISAAC HULL.

The Hon. Paul Hamilton,  
Secretary of the Navy, Washington."









Constitution and Guerriere.



Such is Captain Hull's modest account of this truly brilliant exploit. Sailing on a cruise immediately after this, with the same frigate, officers, and crew, on the 19th of August he fell in with His Britannic Majesty's ship *Guerriere*, rated at thirty-eight guns, and carrying fifty, commanded by Captain Dacres, who, some time before, had politely endorsed on the register of an American ship an invitation to Captain Hull to give him a meeting of this kind.

At half past three, P. M., Captain Hull made out his antagonist to be a frigate, and continued the chase till he was within about three miles, when he cleared for action; the chase backed her main-topsail and waited for him to come down. As soon as the *Constitution* was ready, Hull bore down to bring the enemy to close action immediately; but, on his coming within gunshot, the *Guerriere* gave a broadside and filled away and wore, giving a broadside on the other tack; but without effect, her shot falling short. She then continued wearing and manœuvring for about three-quarters of an hour to get a raking position,—but, finding she could not, she bore up and ran under her topsails and jib, with the wind on the quarter. During this time, the *Constitution*, not having fired a single broadside, the impatience of the officers and men to engage was excessive. Nothing but the most rigid discipline could have restrained them. Hull, however, was preparing to decide the contest in a summary method of his own. He now made sail to bring the *Constitution* up with her antagonist, and, at five minutes before six, P. M., *being alongside within half pistol shot*, he commenced a heavy fire from all his guns, *double-shotted with round and*



*grape*; and so well directed, and so well kept up was the fire, that in sixteen minutes the mizenmast of the *Guerriere* went by the board, and her mainyard in the slings, and the hull, rigging and sails were completely torn to pieces. The fire was kept up for fifteen minutes longer, when the main and foremast went, taking with them every spar except the bowsprit, and leaving the *Guerriere* a complete wreck. On seeing this, Hull ordered the firing to cease, having brought his enemy in thirty minutes after he was fairly alongside to such a condition, that a few more broadsides must have carried her down.

The prize being so shattered that she was not worth bringing into port, after removing the prisoners to the *Constitution*, she was set on fire and blown up. In the action, the *Constitution* lost seven killed, and seven wounded; the *Guerriere*, fifteen killed, sixty-two wounded—including the captain and several officers, and twenty-four missing.

The news of this victory was received in the United States with the greatest joy and exultation. All parties united in celebrating it, and the citizens and public authorities vied with each other in bestowing marks of approbation upon Captain Hull and his gallant officers and crew.

Since the war of 1812, Commodore Hull has commanded in the Pacific and Mediterranean, and on the shore stations in the United States. He came to Philadelphia in the autumn of 1842. In the winter he was seized with the sickness which terminated his honourable and useful life. He retained the full exercise of his mental faculties to the last, and died with the composure becoming his character as a man,



and his hopes as a Christian. He departed this life on Monday, the 13th of February, 1843. He had made his will, and purchased the lot at Laurel Hill cemetery, where his remains are now deposited. Commodore Hull's attachment to his profession always led him to honour it, and to preserve its dignity in his own character and deportment. He always wore his uniform, and, probably by his own direction, his corpse was laid out in the full dress of a commander, and thus—

“He lay like a warrior taking his rest,”

and noble warrior he was—a glorious old commodore—with a soul full of all noble aspirations for his country's honour—a splendid relic of a departed epoch of naval renown.







WILLIAM HENRY ALLEN.



EW among our naval heroes have had a more brilliant career than the subject of this memoir. He entered the service at an early age, was actively engaged during the Tripolitan war, was present and bore a conspicuous part in the action between the United States and Macedonian, and finally fell desperately fighting against a superior force, giving, in his last hour, proofs



of gallantry which elicited the warmest admiration and the most marked tokens of respect from the enemy on whose soil his remains were buried.

WILLIAM HENRY ALLEN was born at Providence, Rhode Island, on the twenty-first day of October, 1784. His father, William Allen, on the breaking out of our revolutionary troubles, was appointed a first lieutenant in the army. He continued in the army until the restoration of peace, and commanded the Rhode Island line of troops at the battle of Saratoga, when he was advanced to the rank of major. He was present and actively engaged in most of the battles which were fought during our revolutionary war; and in 1786, was appointed by Congress, senior officer of the legionary corps raised in Rhode Island. In the year 1799, he was appointed by the legislature of that State, brigadier general of militia. The mother of William Henry Allen, was the sister of the present Governor of Rhode Island. It was the intention of his parent that Henry should have received a liberal education; and he went through the preparatory studies. He panted, however, for more active life; and, notwithstanding the pressing remonstrances of his parents, he entered the navy, as a midshipman, in May 1800.

In three months after his appointment, he was ordered on board the frigate *George Washington*, commanded by Commodore Bainbridge, to carry presents to the Dey of Algiers. On his departure, he writes to his father, "I now bid you a short adieu; but, should it be the last, you shall have the satisfaction to hear of my good conduct in my station as an officer and as a gentleman."



This cruise was attended with peculiarity of incident. The demand of the Dey of Algiers, that the frigate should be employed in carrying his presents to the Grand Seignior, at Constantinople, and the unavailing reluctance and remonstrances of Captain Bainbridge, are circumstances generally known.

It was the first time that the flag of an American frigate had waved in the harbour of Constantinople. The fine order of the ship, and the excellent discipline observed among the officers and men, tended to impress very high ideas of the American character in a quarter of the world where before it was unknown.

Commodore Bainbridge returned to America, on the 19th of April, 1801, when a reduction of the navy ensued. In eight days after the return of the subject of the present memoir, and while he was solacing himself in the hope of once more visiting his family and friends, he was ordered on board the *Philadelphia*, under the command of Captain Barron, to scour the Mediterranean sea again.

He bade his friends a cordial adieu, and entered on the service with that promptitude that ever distinguished him. Nothing material transpired during the cruise. The ship returned to the United States, on the 27th of June, 1802. For the first time, after his entrance into the service of his country, was he now enabled to enjoy the society of his friends, and to visit his paternal abode. This, however, was but a short repose allowed him from the fatigues of naval service, for in October, 1802, he sailed in the frigate *John Adams*, commanded by Captain Rodgers, to visit, for the third time, the shores of the Mediterranean.



During the voyage, he was informed, by his correspondent of a report, which afterwards proved to be unfounded, that a younger officer was advanced over his head. This is the manly reply of a boy of seventeen: "I am too well grounded in old principles to mind such assaults now. If the government decide thus, I can say—amen, with all my heart."

Commodore Rodgers returned from this cruise, in December, 1803. Early in the year 1804, he was ordered on board the frigate Congress, lying at Washington, of which he was appointed sailing master. This frigate sailed on the 1st of July, under the command of Captain Rodgers, for the Mediterranean. On the outward-bound passage, while the ship was lying to, in a violent gale, Allen was on the foreyard, assisting the sailors in taking a reef. Letting fall that part of the sail on which he had hold, he was precipitated headlong into the sea, to the depth of twenty feet, passing, in his fall, very near the anchor on the bows. Fortunately, he arose near the mizen chains, and, by taking hold on them, narrowly escaped inevitable death, as the ship was then drifting very fast. While cruising off the coast of Tripoli, Captain Rodgers intended, if the command should have devolved upon him, in consequence of the illness of Commodore Barron, an attack on that place. He took Allen with him in the schooner to take the soundings, preparatory to the anticipated assault. They entered the harbour with muffled oars; and, after taking a sounding, and complete survey, they passed so near the Tripoline gunboats, that they distinctly heard the men conversing below. They also heard the sentinels on the walls of the battery con-



versing together. As they were returning from the harbour, a heavy gale sprung up, and they had a narrow escape to the Nautilus, which vessel was then in the very act of leaving her position.

In the month of October, 1805, Captain Rodgers removed to the frigate *Constitution*, and assumed the command of the squadron, in consequence of the return of Captain Barron to the United States. Mr. Allen was also removed to the *Constitution*, and promoted to a lieutenancy. He served as third lieutenant on board the *Constitution*, and returned in that frigate to the United States, in the year 1806.

During these several cruises to the Mediterranean, although nothing transpired on board of the frigates where Lieutenant Allen was stationed, that might fairly be denominated naval glory, still a peculiarity of circumstances gave a lofty and elevated tone to the feelings of all the officers. An American squadron in the waters of the Mediterranean was itself a novelty. That squadron was small, and it was destined to pass under the review and strict scrutiny of English ships of war occasionally stationed in these seas, and passing the straits of Gibraltar. Personal courage, skill, and correctness of discipline, could alone insure them respect in a company so illustrious; and to these points all their efforts were directed. They felt the high responsibility attached to their station, and, knowing how important the first impression of a national character was, they acted up to that dignity which the occasion demanded.

After this long and fatiguing cruise, he was permitted, for a short time, to visit his friends and relations in Providence. In February, 1807, he



received orders from Government to join the frigate Chesapeake, commanded by Captain Barron, then fitting out at Washington, for the straits. He remained at Philadelphia while the ship was preparing for sea, during which time he was busily employed in recruiting men for the service, and then entered as third lieutenant. The attack on the Chesapeake, by the Leopard, succeeded shortly after the former sailing. The unfortunate result of this affair was peculiarly trying to Lieutenant Allen, and his feelings were very warmly expressed at the time in his letters. The only gun that was fired at the Leopard, during the encounter, was touched off by Mr. Allen, by means of a coal held in his fingers.

During the operation of the embargo, in 1808, the Chesapeake, to which Lieutenant Allen was still attached, cruised off Block island, and captured several vessels violating the law. From motives of delicacy, he desired to be excused from boarding any vessels belonging to his native State. Mr. Allen remained in the Chesapeake, in this service, until February 1809, when he was ordered, by government, to join the frigate United States, while lying at Washington, under the command of Commodore Decatur. The Commodore was himself absent, and the equipping of the frigate was a duty that devolved on his first lieutenant, who was not, for a space of two months, absent a moment from the navy yard. This ship lay part of the time at Norfolk, and the remainder of the time was engaged in short cruises on the coast, until the declaration of war against Great Britain, in 1812. Shortly after, the United States frigate sailed upon a cruise; and on the 25th of October, 1812, in



latitude 29, N. longitude 29, 30, W., fell in with His Britannic Majesty's ship, the *Macedonian*, commanded by Captain Carden. She was a frigate of the largest class, mounting forty-nine carriage guns, and reputed one of the swiftest sailers in the British navy. When this frigate first hove in sight, and while orders were given on board of the *United States* to prepare for action, Lieutenant Allen mounted aloft; and, after watching her closely for some time, at length discovered the English pennant. He descended to his comrades, who were impatiently awaiting him below, and jocosely pronounced the frigate a lawful prize. The enemy having the advantage of the wind, fought at his own distance, and the contest was kept up for one hour and fifty minutes. The *United States* poured such an incessant fire, that the shouts from the crew of the *Macedonian* were distinctly heard, who, from that cause, apprehended her to be in flames. Her colours were, nevertheless, hauled down shortly afterwards. In the engagement, she lost her mizen-mast, fore and main-topmasts, and mainyard. She was likewise much damaged in her hull. Thirty-six were killed and forty-eight wounded. On board the *United States* frigate five only were killed, and seven wounded. The American frigate received so little damage in this engagement, that she would still have continued her cruise, had it not been necessary for her to accompany her prize into port, on account of the crippled state of the British frigate. Any comments on this splendid action—an action so glorious to the arms of our countrymen—would surely now be needless.

In the *United States* frigate, Lieutenant Allen was



most assiduous in exercising and training the crew to the use of the artillery. The accuracy with which the guns were directed, and the celerity with which they could be fired, evince the improvement of their discipline; and, indeed, it could not be surpassed. After Captain Carden had gone on board the *United States*, Lieutenant Allen requested the other officers to go in a boat which was ready for them. The first lieutenant of the *Macedonian* surlily said, "You do not intend to send me away without my baggage?"

"I hope," replied Allen, "you do not suppose you have been taken by privateersmen?"

"I do not know"—replied the other rudely—"by whom I am taken."

Lieutenant Allen sternly ordered him instantly into the boat, and he immediately went. Lieutenant Allen placed a guard over the baggage of the officers, and, as soon as the other duties which demanded his attention were concluded, he sent the same day all the baggage on board the *United States*. The surgeon of the *Macedonian* continued on board; and he frequently, in conversation, bore testimony to the kindness of Lieutenant Allen, towards that part of the crew remaining in the *Macedonian*, particularly toward the wounded. The wardroom officers of the *Macedonian* expressed to the wardroom officers of the *United States*, a deep sense of the civilities which they had received; and wished to give, jointly, another expression of their gratitude, in a writing which might be considered as a letter to all British officers, to secure their good treatment, in case the *United States* should be captured. This certificate of protection was very properly declined.



To Lieutenant Allen was entrusted the honourable charge of bringing the prize into port, and she safely arrived in the harbour of New York, amidst the enthusiastic gratulations of our countrymen. His share in this glorious action cannot be better expressed than in the words of Commodore Decatur himself: "It would be unjust," continues this gallant officer, "it would be unjust in me to discriminate, where all met my fullest expectations. Permit me, however, to recommend to the particular notice of the Secretary, my first lieutenant, Wm. H. Allen, who has served with me upwards of five years; and to his unremitted exertions, in disciplining the crew, is to be imputed the obvious superiority of our gunnery, exhibited in the result of this conquest."

The corporation and citizens of New York honoured him and his commander with a splendid and superb festival; and the legislatures of Rhode Island and Virginia presented him with a sword, as a testimonial of their sense of his gallant services. There was every thing in this victory which could gratify the pride of an American. The individual injury done to our enemy by the loss of a frigate, or the advantage to ourselves, by acquiring one, is nothing. It inspires a loftiness of feeling, a confidence, that is communicated to other souls, and introduces a strain of patriotic sensations perfectly novel. It breaks the sea-spell that seemed to surround the navy of England.

When the Macedonian struck, Lieutenant Allen, in taking possession, came alongside. Those on board were so uncivil as to neglect handing him a rope, for the purpose of getting on board, and he had



to clamber up the side by the chains. Arriving at Nantucket shoals, the United States frigate and the Macedonian, which, before, had continually kept together, then parted in a gale. The wind was so high, he entertained serious apprehensions that the vessel would founder. He determined, as a last resort, to anchor where she was, putting two or three cables on end. He thought he could ride any gale in that manner, and would not believe the contrary, until it was proved by experiment. The storm, however, abated, and he arrived safe at Newport, to the great exultation of the inhabitants of that place, on the same day of the same month that Admiral Parker arrived there with his fleet, during our revolutionary war.

He here received a visit from his uncle, the Governor of Rhode Island, whom he invited down, and saluted with a discharge of nine guns on his arrival on board. While in the Sound, waiting a favourable wind, to proceed to New York, he was visited by people from all parts of the adjacent country.

The Sunday previous to the battle, the wardroom officers of the Macedonian toasted an American frigate. On the following Sunday, they were gratified by the fulfilment of their wishes.

After this, Lieutenant Allen was allowed some little respite from the naval service; he visited his native land, and received the kind congratulations of his relatives and friends, in the bosom of his paternal abode. This repose was, however, but of short duration; the strong and imperative calls of his country, once more summoned him to active duty.

Shortly after the arrival of the Macedonian at New York, the Argus returned to that port, com-



manded by Captain Sinclair. He obtained leave to visit his friends; and, by order of Commodore Decatur, Lieutenant Allen took the command. He thoroughly repaired the vessel, and received an order from the Commodore to go in quest of a British brig of war, reported to be in the Sound. The whole crew of the *Hornet*, commanded by Lieutenant Shu-  
brick, volunteered their services. He remained in the Sound for the space of a week, without meeting with the enemy, when he received the orders of the Commodore to return.

On the death of Mr. Barlow, our Minister at the court of France, our government deemed it expedient to renew the negotiation. Mr. Crawford was appointed as his successor; and the subject of the present memoir, now advanced to the rank of master and commander, was directed to take command of the *Argus*, and to conduct our minister to the place of his destination. He accepted the appointment with his usual promptitude, and sailed with our new minister for France. He was so fortunate as to elude the vigilance of the blockading squadron, and arrived at the port of L'Orient, in twenty-three days. He informs the Secretary of the Navy, in his letter, bearing date June 12th, 1813, that "he shall immediately proceed to put in execution his orders as to the ulterior purposes of his destination."

The business here, which, from prudential motives, is so darkly hinted at, was, undoubtedly, as appears from the sequel, to sail in the Irish channel, and annoy the English commerce. It was a service, to a man fond of glory, peculiarly invidious. Such conquests were attended with no honour; and Captain



Allen, in compliance with his orders, seemed peculiarly solicitous, in the discharge of this unthankful office, to make the enemy feel and confess the motives by which he was guided. The injury which he did to the British commerce is, in some of their papers, estimated to the amount of two millions. While thus employed in burning, sinking, and destroying the enemy's property, Captain Allen was peculiarly careful to distinguish his character from those who depredated for selfish purposes only. The property of the passengers was sacred from hostility; not an article of that kind would he suffer to be touched. The passengers were allowed to go below, and to take what they claimed as their own, and no hands belonging to the *Argus* were permitted to inspect them while they were employed in so doing. On one occasion, when a passenger had left his surtout behind him, it was sent after him in the boat; on another occasion, Captain Allen ordered one of his hands, who was detected in the act of some petty plunder of this kind, to be flogged at the gangway. The English papers, while they were writhing under the severe injuries thus inflicted, were unanimous in their testimonials of respect to the conduct of this gallant officer, for the humanity and delicacy with which he performed a service so invidious. Probably no action of his life could more plainly distinguish his character than this; he loved danger, as much as he abhorred to plunder the defenceless.

It appears very evident, that if prudence was consulted, it was his duty to avoid an engagement. The damage which he might have done the enemy, by another species of warfare, was, beyond all comparison,



greater than by risking a battle, even if fortune should decide the controversy in his favour. Even a victory ensured capture, for, alone and unsupported as he was, his own ship would, in all human probability, suffer material injury, and both the captured and the captor become the prize of one of the many frigates then swarming in the English channel. These considerations, however, would have but little weight with him. He declared previously to his setting out, that he would run from no two masted vessel. Anxious to quit himself of a business which he so much disliked, he sought an opportunity to act in a situation more congenial to his feelings. He burned for an encounter with an enemy even of considerably superior force, with whom he might risk an encounter; and the opportunity finally presented itself.

By the official letter of Lieutenant Watson to the Secretary of the Navy, dated at Norfolk, on the 2d of March, 1815, it appears that the number of vessels captured by the *Argus* during the cruise was twenty, and that in latitude  $52^{\circ} 15'$ , N. longitude  $5^{\circ} 50'$  W., on the 14th of August, 1813, at four o'clock, P. M., they discovered a large brig of war bearing down upon them, under a press of sail, and immediately prepared to receive her. The action commenced at six o'clock, and lasted till forty-seven minutes past six, during a greater part of which time the enemy, having a choice of position which enabled him to rake the *Argus* repeatedly, and to render her unmanageable from the injury done to the rigging in the early part of the action, reduced the *Argus* to a complete wreck, and she was finally compelled to strike. This result is not to be wondered at, when we consider



the superior force of the enemy's vessel, which was the sloop of war Pelican, of twenty-one carriage guns; viz., sixteen thirty-two pound carronades, four long sixes, and one twelve pound carronade.\* The Argus lost six killed in the action, five who subsequently died of their wounds, and twelve wounded. Among the killed were two midshipmen—Messrs. Delphy and Edwards—and among the mortally wounded, was the gallant Captain Allen himself. He was desperately wounded in the early part of the action; refused to be carried below, and fainted on the deck from the loss of blood. When he was removed from his berth to the hospital, for amputation, he cast his languid eyes on his faithful comrades, and feelingly pronounced these words: "God bless you, my lads! we shall never meet again." The following letter will speak for itself.

[Copy of a letter from John Hawker, Esq., cidevant American vice consul, dated]

*"Plymouth, 19th August, 1813.*

"SIR:—The situation I have had the honour to hold for many years past, of American vice consul, calls forth my poignant feelings in the communication I have to make to you, of the death of your son, Captain Allen, late commanding the United States' brig of war Argus, which vessel was captured on Saturday last, in the Irish channel, after a very sharp action of three-quarters of an hour, by His Britannic Majesty's ship Pelican.

"Early in the contest, Captain Allen lost his leg, but refused to be carried below, till, from the loss of blood, he fainted. Messrs. Edwards and Delphy, midshipmen, and four seamen, were killed; and Lieutenant Watson, the carpenter, boatswain, boatswain's mate, and seven men wounded. Captain Allen submitted to amputation

\* The Argus rated sixteen, and carried twenty guns; viz., eighteen twenty-four pound carronades, and two long twelves. The British state their loss at seven killed and wounded.



above the knee, while at sea. He was yesterday morning attended by very eminent surgical gentlemen, and removed from the *Argus* to the hospital, where every possible attention and assistance would have been afforded, had he survived; but which was not, from the first moment, expected, from the shattered state of his thigh. At eleven, last night, he breathed his last! He was sensible, at intervals, till within ten minutes of his dissolution, when he sunk exhausted, and expired without a struggle. His lucid intervals were very cheerful; and he was satisfied and fully sensible that no advice or assistance would be wanting. A detached room was prepared by the commissary and chief surgeon, and female attendants engaged, that every tenderness and respect might be experienced. The master, purser, surgeon, and one midshipman, accompanied Captain Allen, who was also attended by his two servants.

"I have communicated and arranged with the officers respecting the funeral, which will be in the most respectful, and, at the same time, economical manner. The port admiral has signified that it is the intention of His Britannic Majesty's government that it be publicly attended by officers of rank, and with military honours. The time fixed for the procession is on Saturday, at eleven, A. M. A lieutenant-colonel's guard, of the Royal Marines, is also appointed. A wainscot coffin has been ordered; on the breastplate of which will be inscribed as below.\* Mr. Delphy, one of the midshipmen who lost *both* legs, and died at sea, was buried yesterday, in St. Andrew's churchyard. I have requested that Captain Allen may be buried as near him, on the right, (in the same vault, if practicable,) as possible.

"I remain, respectfully, sir,

"Your most obedient humble servant,

(Signed.)

"JOHN HAWKER.

"Cidevant American vice consul.

"To General Allen, &c., &c., &c.,

"Providence, Rhode Island."

The following extract from a London paper, shows the order of procession.

\* A tablet, whereon will be recorded the name, rank, age, and character of the deceased, and also of the midshipman, will be placed, (if it can be contrived,) as I have suggested; both having lost their lives in fighting for their country.



*“Plymouth, August 24.*

“On Saturday last, the 21st, was interred with military honours, William Henry Allen, Esq., late commander of the United States sloop of war Argus, who lost his left leg in an action with His Majesty’s sloop of war Pelican, J. F. Maples, Esq., captain, in St. George’s channel, the 14th inst., whereof he died in the Mill Prison hospital, on the 15th following.

“PROCESSION.—Guard of honour. Lieutenant-colonel of Royal Marines, with two companies of that corps. The captains, subalterns, and field adjutant. (Officers with hatbands and scarfs.) Royal Marine band. Vicar and Curate of St. Andrew’s. Clerk of ditto. The *Hearse*—with the corpse of the deceased Captain—attended by eight seamen, late of the Argus, with crape round their arms, tied with white crape ribbon. Also eight British captains, of the Royal Navy, as Pall-bearers, with hatbands and scarfs. Captain Allen’s servants, in mourning. The officers late of the Argus, in uniform, with crape sashes and hatbands, two and two. John Hawker, Esq., late American vice consul, and his clerks. Captain Pellowe, commissioner for prisoners of war. Dr. Magrath, chief medical officer at Mill Prison depot. Captains of the Royal Navy in port, two and two—followed by a very numerous and respectable retinue of inhabitants.

“The procession left Mill Prison at twelve o’clock. The coffin was covered with a velvet pall, and the ensign under which the action was fought, and upon that the hat and sword of the deceased were laid. On the coffin being removed to the hearse, the guard saluted; and, when deposited in the hearse, the pro-



cession moved forward, the band playing the 'Dead March in Saul.' On their arrival near the church, the guard halted and clubbed arms, single files inward, through which the procession passed to the church, into which the corpse was carried, and deposited in the centre aisle, while the funeral service was read by the reverend Vicar, after which it was removed and interred in the south yard, (passing through the guard in the same manner from as to the church,) on the right of Mr. Delphy, midshipman of the *Argus*, who lost both his legs in the same action, and was buried the preceding evening."

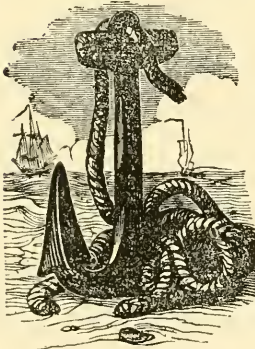
Thus lived and died, William Henry Allen. By the company and conversation of the elegant and polite, the hard and severe duties of the sailor acquired a sort of polish, and his character presented that combination of gallantry, grace, and intrepidity, that so irresistibly attracts. In the hour of danger, he was calm, intrepid and persevering; in private intercourse guarded, affable, and delicate. Entering into the navy with large and expanded ideas of honour, the perils he encountered, and the hard service he endured, consolidated his romantic and floating visions into rules and principles of action. By never lowering his lofty standard amidst the jostle of so many contending difficulties, he at length arrived at the eminence which he sought, and new trials served only to call into exercise new and unexplored resources of fortitude. He had so long forsaken every other consideration for glory, that he finally measured his life by this standard, and felt a repulsive antipathy to whatever fell short of that measure.\*

\* Port Folio.





JOHNSTON BLAKELEY.



JOHNSTON BLAKELEY was born near the village of Seaford, in the county of Down, Ireland, in the month of October, 1781. Two years afterwards his father, Mr. John Blakeley, emigrated to this country ; and, after residing at Philadelphia a few months, left it for Charleston, South Carolina, with a view of engaging in business. Meeting, however, with but little encouragement at Charleston, he finally removed to Wilmington, North Carolina, allured by more favourable prospects. Soon



after his establishment at this place, Mr. Blakeley was deprived, one by one, of his wife, and all his children, except his son Johnston.

Ascribing these successive losses to the insalubrity of the climate, which is said to be peculiarly unfavourable to children, Mr. Blakeley was induced to send his only surviving son to New York; as well with a view to the preservation of his health, as to afford him an opportunity of acquiring an education. Johnston was, accordingly, in the year 1790, sent to that place, and committed to the care of Mr. Hoope, a respectable merchant of that place, and an old friend of his father. Here he remained five years, assiduously pursuing his studies; at the end of which he returned to Wilmington, where he remained for some time without any particular pursuit or occupation.

It was the intention of his father to bring him up to the law, and, with a view to qualify him for that profession, he was placed, in 1796, at the University of North Carolina,—a most respectable institution, situated at Chapel Hill, in the county of Orange. While pursuing his studies here, he was deprived of his father, who died the year after young Blakely entered the University; leaving behind him the character of a good man, equally exemplary as a parent and a citizen. Young Blakeley was now without a relative in this country, to whom he could look up for advice, or protection, or assistance; and it became necessary for him to choose a guardian. In this choice he was singularly fortunate, in the selection of Mr. Jones, an eminent lawyer, of Wilmington, who most tenderly and generously supplied the place of a



father. With occasional intermissions, he remained at college till some time in the year 1799; when, by some misfortune, of which we have never been able to obtain any distinct account, and which, therefore, we will not attempt to detail, he was deprived of the support derived from his father, and compelled to relinquish his studies at the University, as well as his intention of practising the law.

Having long had a predilection for a naval life,—which, however, he had, with a self-denial worthy of imitation, concealed from his father,—he solicited, and, through the friendly exertions of Mr. Jones, obtained a midshipman's warrant, in the year 1800. It is but just to state, however, that previous to making this application, Mr. Jones, desirous that his young ward should fulfil the wishes of his deceased parent, kindly offered to take him to his house, and to afford him every facility in his power, to complete his legal studies. Unwilling to accumulate obligations he might never repay, and, perhaps, too, stimulated by a clear perception of the line of life nature had marked out for him, he declined this generous offer. In every subsequent situation, he retained and demonstrated the most grateful recollection of Mr. Jones's friendship, and, to the end of his life, acknowledged him his benefactor.

“As any thing”—writes the gentlemen who furnished us the materials for this Biography, and whose language we have almost every where followed—“which illustrates the character of so much departed worth, especially where the qualities of the heart are so well calculated to excite our admiration, cannot but be interesting, I have furnished a few extracts



from the letters of Captain Blakeley, written to me at various periods. Having been deprived of his father at an age when the desire of knowing something of his family was beginning to be felt, it was not in his power to gratify his inquiries on that subject, in a satisfactory manner, until May 1811, when I had the pleasure of opening a correspondence with him.

“In his first letter, dated on board the United States’ brig *Enterprise*, May 9th, 1811, he manifested his anxiety to obtain the wished for information, relative to his connexions, in the following manner:— ‘It would afford me great gratification to hear from you all the information you possess respecting my relations. This trouble your goodness will excuse, when I inform you that for fourteen years I have not beheld one being to whom I was bound by any tie of consanguinity.’ In another letter, written soon after, he observes, ‘The affection manifested by —— is truly grateful to my heart. Indeed, I begin already to feel for her a filial regard, and the more so, as it was my lot to lose my mother before I was sensible of a mother’s tenderness.’ In reply to a letter, in which the solicitude for his professional reputation was cordially expressed by the female above alluded to, he remarks—‘Should I be fortunate enough to acquire any fame, my good old friend will make me debtor for more than half. With her prayers for my success can I doubt it? I hope the last Blakeley who exists will lay down his life ere he tarnish the reputation of those who have gone before him. My father’s memory is very dear to me, and I trust his son will never cast a reproach on it.’ In another, he observes, ‘It is true that in the war in



which we are engaged, we have to contend under great disadvantages; but this should stimulate to greater exertions, and we have already seen that our enemy is not invincible.' In a letter, dated on board the *Enterprise*, the 29th of April, 1813, he observes, 'Independent of personal feeling, I rejoice at the good fortune of the navy, believing it to be that description of force best adapted to the defence of this country. I confess the success of our sailors has been much greater than I had any reason to expect, taking into view the many difficulties they had to encounter. The charm which once seemed to have encircled the British navy, and rendered its very name formidable, appears to be fast dispelling.'

"In a letter, dated Newburyport, 28th January, 1814, he remarks: 'I shall ever view as one of the most unfortunate events of my life, having quitted the *Enterprise* at the moment I did. Had I remained in her a fortnight longer, my name might have been classed with those who stand so high. I cannot but consider it a mortifying circumstance that I left her, but a few days before she fell in with the only enemy on this station with which she could have creditably contended. I confess I felt heartily glad when I received my order to take command of the *Wasp*, conceiving that there was no hope of doing any thing in the *Enterprise*. But when I heard of the contest of the latter ship, and witnessed the great delay in the equipment of the former, I had no cause to congratulate myself. The *Peacock* has ere this spread her plumage to the winds, and the *Frolic* will soon take her revels on the ocean, but the *Wasp* will, I fear, remain for some time a dull, harmless drone in the



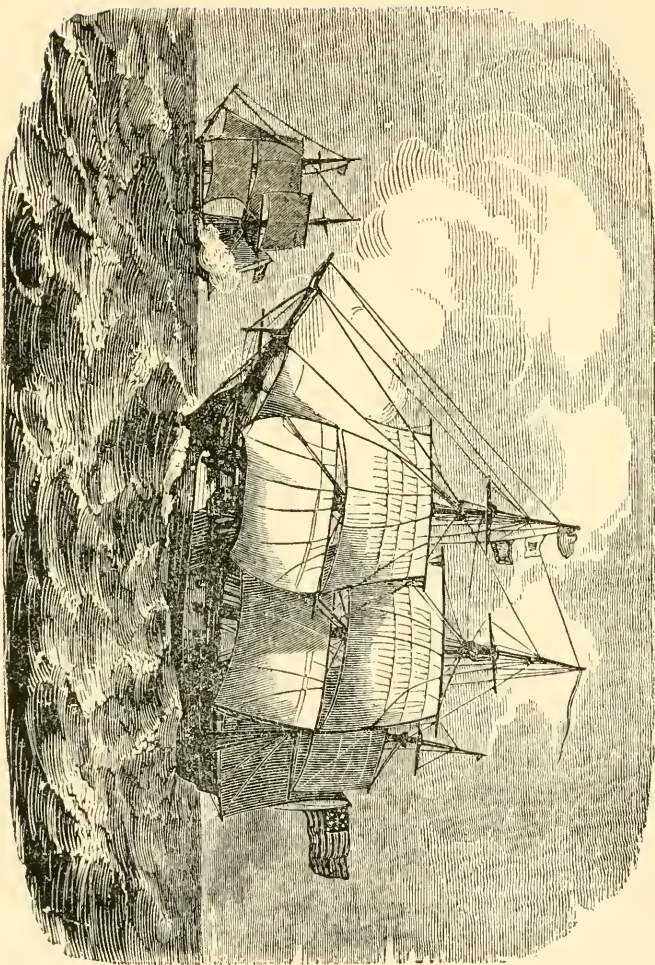
waters of her own country. Why this is, I am not permitted to inquire.' ”

These extracts will strike the reader as being strongly indicative of an amiable and heroic character. There is something touching in his gratitude to the good old lady who had manifested an interest in his successes. There is something noble in his reference to the memory of his father, as a motive stimulating him in the path of honour; and there is something heroic, we think, in the unaffected manner in which he expresses his regret at having left the Enterprise. It is not necessary to remind the reader that it was in the action between that vessel and the Boxer that Burroughs conquered, and lost his life. Yet Blakeley regretted he had not been in his place, either because he considered the sacrifice of life as a cheap price for the purchase of glory, or had forgot, in his love of fame, that such a price had been paid. But he was determined before long to acquire at least equal reputation, and to perish equally with the regrets of his country.

After various services, which it is unnecessary to particularize, as they afforded no opportunity to acquire distinction, Blakeley was made a master commandant, in 1813, and soon after appointed to the Wasp. In this vessel he fell in with, in latitude 48° 36', N., His Britannic Majesty's ship Reindeer, mounting sixteen twenty-four pound carronades, two long nine-pounders, and a shifting twelve pound carronade; and having a complement of one hundred and eighteen men. An action commenced; and, in nineteen minutes, ended in the capture of the Reindeer. The loss of the Americans was twenty-one killed and



Wasp and Reindeer.









wounded; that of the enemy sixty-seven. The Rein-deer was cut to pieces, in such a manner as to render it impossible to save her; and she was accordingly set on fire. After this the Wasp put into L'Orient; from which port she sailed the 27th of August, and four days afterwards falling in with ten sail of merchantmen, under convoy of a ship of the line, she succeeded in cutting off one of the vessels.

The evening of the 1st of September, 1814, she fell in with four sail, two on each bow,—but at considerable distances from each other. The first was the British brig of war Avon, which struck after a severe action; but Captain Blakeley could not take possession, as another enemy was now approaching. This enemy, it seems, however, was called off to the assistance of the Avon, which was now sinking. The enemy reported that they had sunk the Wasp by the first broadside; but she was afterwards spoken by a vessel off the Western Isles. After this we hear of her no more; and though her fate is certain, the circumstances attending it are beyond the reach of discovery. The most general impression is, that she was lost by one of those casualties incident to the great deep, which have destroyed so many gallant vessels, in a manner no one knows how—for there are so many uncertainties connected with the unfathomable deep, that even imagination is bewildered in tracing the fate of those who are only known to have perished, because they are never more heard of or seen. Another impression is, that the Wasp, very shortly after being spoken off the Western Isles, had a severe engagement with a British frigate, which put into Lisbon in a shattered condition; and reported



having had an action, in the night, with a vessel, which was not seen next morning, although the whole night had been calm.

But, whatever may have been the fate of Blakeley, this much is certain,—that he will, to use his own expression, “be classed among those names that stand so high.” The lustre of his exploits, not less than the interest excited by those who remember how, in his very boyhood, he was left, as he says, without a single being around him with whom he could claim kindred blood,—how, by his merit, he obtained friends, and conferred honour on that country which was not only his parent, but which has become the parent of his only child,—and how, last of all, he perished God only knows how or where,—has all given to his character, his history, his achievements, and his fate, a romantic interest, marking the name of Blakeley for lasting and affectionate remembrance.

In his person, Captain Blakeley was rather below the middle stature; his eyes black, expressive, intelligent, and animated; his manners mild, manly, and unassuming; and his person handsome. Notwithstanding his professional duties, which were scarcely interrupted from the time of his obtaining a warrant, his literary and scientific acquirements were very respectable; and among his brother officers he was always considered as a man of uncommon intellect, as well as of great courage and professional skill. He was married, in December, 1813, to Miss Jane Hoope, the daughter of his father’s old friend, Mr. Hoope, of New York; and has left an only daughter, who has lately received one of the most noble and substantial and affecting tributes of national gratitude



which has occurred in the history of this country. The legislature of North Carolina, on the 27th of December, 1816, after prescribing the destination of the sword they had voted to Captain Blakeley, "Resolved, unanimously, That Captain Blakeley's child be educated at the expense of this State; and that Mrs. Blakeley be requested to draw on the Treasurer of this State, from time to time, for such sums of money as shall be required for the education of the said child."

This, we repeat it, is substantial gratitude. It is classical, too,—and reminds us of those noble eras in the history of some of the illustrious states of Greece, when the offspring of those who had fallen for their country, became the children of that country whose cause had made them fatherless. It is in this way that our states may acquire a sort of parental character, that will endear them still more to the hearts of the citizens; that will inspire fathers to die in defence of their country, and mothers to educate their children to follow the example. It is in this way, too, that the different members of the union may nobly indulge their local feelings, and display their honest homebred affections. Let them exemplify their desire to appropriate to themselves the fame of their distinguished citizens, by their peculiar care in honouring their memory, and cherishing their helpless orphans. It is thus that our sister states ought ever to display their rivalry;—by being as zealous to reward, as they are to appropriate the achievements of their sons.\*

\* *Analectic Magazine*, vol. ix.





STEPHEN DECATUR.



IN some families, it would seem that chivalry runs in the blood. The Bayards, Biddles, and Decaturs, are born to a heroic destiny by the right of inheritance. When we meet with their names in history, we feel assured of what is to follow; and their most daring feats hardly excite an emotion of surprise. Among the many members of his family distinguished for their bravery, the most celebrated is the subject of this memoir.



Commodore Decatur was of French descent, by the male line. His grandfather was a native of La Rochelle, in France, and married a lady of Rhode Island. His father, Stephen Decatur, was born in Newport, Rhode Island, and, when a very young man, removed to Philadelphia, where he married the daughter of an Irish gentleman by the name of Pine. He was bred to the sea, and commanded a merchant vessel out of the port of Philadelphia, until the establishment of the navy, when he was appointed to command the Delaware sloop of war. He continued in her until the frigate Philadelphia was built, when the command of that ship was given to him, at the particular request of the merchants, who had built her by subscription. In this situation he remained until peace was made with France, when he resigned his commission, and retired to his residence, a few miles from Philadelphia, where he resided until his death, which happened in November, 1808.

His son, STEPHEN DECATUR, the late Commodore, was born on the 5th January, 1779, on the eastern shore of Maryland, whither his parents had retired, while the British were in possession of Philadelphia. They returned to that city when he was a few months old, and he was there educated and brought up.

He entered the navy in March, 1798, as midshipman, and joined the frigate United States, under the command of Commodore Barry, who had obtained the warrant for him. He continued for some time with that officer, and was promoted to the rank of lieutenant. The United States at that time required some repairs, and, not wishing to remain in port, he requested an order to join the brig Norfolk, then



bound to the Spanish Main. He performed one cruise in her, as first lieutenant, and, on his return to port, resumed his station on board the *United States*, where he remained, until peace was concluded with France.

He was then ordered to the *Essex*, as first lieutenant, and sailed with Commodore Dale's squadron to the Mediterranean. On the return of that squadron, he was ordered to the *New York*, one of the second Mediterranean squadron, under the command of Commodore Morris.

When he returned to the *United States*, he was ordered to take command of the *Argus*, and proceed in her to join Commodore Preble's squadron, then in the Mediterranean, and, on his arrival there, to resign the command of the *Argus* to Lieutenant Hull, and take the schooner *Enterprise*, then commanded by that officer. After making that exchange, he proceeded to Syracuse, where the squadron was to rendezvous. On his arrival at that port, he was informed of the fate of the frigate *Philadelphia*, which had run aground on the Barbary coast, and fallen into the hands of the Tripolitans. The idea immediately presented itself to his mind of attempting her recapture or destruction. On Commodore Preble's arrival, a few days afterwards, he proposed to him a plan for the purpose, and volunteered his services to execute it. The wary mind of that veteran officer at first disapproved of an enterprise so full of peril; but the risks and difficulties that surrounded it, only stimulated the ardour of Decatur, and imparted to it an air of adventure, fascinating to his youthful imagination.

The consent of the Commodore having been ob-



tained, Lieutenant Decatur selected for the expedition a ketch (the *Intrepid*) which he had captured a few weeks before from the enemy, and manned her with seventy volunteers, chiefly from his own crew. He sailed from Syracuse on the 3d of February, 1804, accompanied by the United States brig *Syren*, Lieutenant Stewart, who was to aid with his boats, and to receive the crew of the ketch, in case it should be found expedient to use her as a fire ship.

After fifteen days of very tempestuous weather, they arrived at the harbour of Tripoli, a little before sunset. It had been arranged between lieutenants Decatur and Stewart, that the ketch should enter the harbour about ten o'clock that night, attended by the boats of the *Syren*. On arriving off the harbour, the *Syren*, in consequence of a change of wind, had been thrown six or eight miles without the *Intrepid*. The wind at this time was fair, but fast declining, and Lieutenant Decatur apprehended that, should he wait for the *Syren's* boats to come up, it might be fatal to the enterprise, as they could not remain longer on the coast, their provisions being nearly exhausted. For these reasons he determined to adventure into the harbour alone, which he did about eight o'clock.

An idea may be formed of the extreme hazard of the enterprise from the situation of the frigate. She was moored within half gunshot of the Bashaw's castle, and of the principal battery. Two of the enemy's cruisers lay within two cables' length, on the starboard quarter, and their gunboats within half gun shot, on the starboard bow. All the guns of the frigate were mounted and loaded. Such were the immediate perils that our hero ventured to encounter



with a single ketch, beside the other dangers that abound in a strongly fortified harbour.

Although from the entrance to the place where the frigate lay, was only three miles, yet, in consequence of the lightness of the wind, they did not get within hail of her until eleven o'clock. When they had approached within two hundred yards, they were hailed and ordered to anchor, or they would be fired into. Lieutenant Decatur ordered a Maltese pilot, who was on board the ketch, to answer that they had lost their anchors in a gale of wind on the coast, and, therefore, could not comply with their request. By this time it had become perfectly calm, and they were about fifty yards from the frigate. Lieutenant Decatur ordered a small boat that was alongside of the ketch, to take a rope and make it fast to the frigate's forechains. This being done, they began to warp the ketch alongside. It was not until this moment that the enemy suspected the character of their visitor, and great confusion immediately ensued. This enabled our adventurers to get alongside of the frigate, when Decatur immediately sprang aboard, followed by Mr. Charles Morris, midshipman. These two were nearly a minute on deck, before their companions could succeed in mounting the side. Fortunately, the Turks had not sufficiently recovered from their surprise to take advantage of this delay. They were crowded together on the quarterdeck, perfectly astonished and aghast, without making any attempt to oppose the assailing party. As soon as a sufficient number of our men had gained the deck to form a front equal to that of the enemy, they rushed in upon them. The Turks stood the assault for a short time,







Burning of the Philadelphia.





and were completely overpowered. About twenty were killed on the spot, many jumped overboard, and the rest flew to the maindeck, whither they were pursued and driven to the hold.

After entire possession had been gained of the ship, and every thing prepared to set fire to her, a number of launches were seen rowing about the harbour. This determined Lieutenant Decatur to remain on board the frigate, from whence a better defence could be made than from on board the ketch. The enemy had already commenced firing on them from their batteries and castle, and from two corsairs that were lying near. Perceiving that the launches did not attempt to approach, he ordered the ship should be set on fire, which was done, at the same time, in different parts. As soon as this was done, they left her; and such was the rapidity of the flames, that it was with the utmost difficulty they preserved the ketch. At this critical moment a most propitious breeze sprang up, blowing directly out of the harbour, which, in a few moments, carried them out of reach of the enemy's guns, and they made good their retreat without the loss of a single man, and with but four wounded.

For this gallant and romantic achievement, Lieutenant Decatur was promoted to the rank of post captain, there being at that time no intermediate grade. This promotion was peculiarly gratifying to him, insomuch as it was done with the consent of the officers over whose heads he was raised.

In the ensuing spring, it being determined to make an attack upon Tripoli, Commodore Preble obtained from the King of Naples, the loan of six gunboats



and two bombards, which he formed into two divisions, and gave the command of one of them to Captain Decatur, the other to Lieutenant Somers. The squadron sailed from Syracuse, consisting of the frigate Constitution, the brig Syren, the schooners Nautilus and Vixen, and the gunboats.

Having arrived on the coast of Barbary, they were for some days prevented from making the attack, by adverse wind and weather. At length, on the morning of the 3d of August, the weather being favourable, the signal was made from the Commodore's ship to prepare for action, the light vessels towing the gunboats to windward. At nine o'clock, the signal was given for bombarding the enemy's vessels and the town.

The gunboats were cast off, and advanced in a line ahead, led on by Captain Decatur, and covered by the frigate Constitution, and the brigs and schooners.

The enemy's gunboats were moored along the harbour under the batteries and within musket shot. Their sails had been taken from them, and they were ordered to sink, rather than abandon their position. They were aided and covered, likewise, by a brig of sixteen, and a schooner of ten guns.

Before entering into close action, Captain Decatur went alongside each of his boats, and ordered them to unship their bowsprits and follow him, as it was his intention to board the enemy's boats.

Lieutenant James Decatur commanded one of the boats belonging to Commodore Preble's division, but, being farther to windward than the rest of his division, he joined and took orders from his brother.

When Captain Decatur, who was in the leading



boat, came within range of the fire from the batteries, a heavy fire was opened upon him from them and the gunboats. He returned their fire, and continued advancing, until he came in contact with the boats. At this time, Commodore Preble seeing Decatur advancing nearer than he thought prudent, ordered the signal to be made for a retreat, but it was found that in making out the signals for the boats, the one for a retreat had been omitted.

The enemy's boats had about forty men each; ours an equal number, twenty-seven of whom were Americans, and thirteen Neapolitans.

Decatur, on boarding the enemy, was instantly followed by his countrymen, but the Neapolitans remained behind. The Turks did not sustain the combat hand to hand, with that firmness they had obtained a reputation for. In ten minutes the deck was cleared. Eight of them sought refuge in the hold, and, of the rest, some fell on the deck, and others jumped into the sea. Only three of the Americans were wounded.

As Decatur was about to proceed out with his prize, the boat which had been commanded by his brother, came under his stern, and the men informed him that they had engaged and captured one of the enemy; but that her commander, after surrendering, had treacherously shot Lieutenant James Decatur, and pushed off with the boat, and was then making for the harbour.

The feelings of the gallant Decatur, on receiving this intelligence, may be more easily imagined than described. Every consideration of prudence and safety was lost in his eagerness to punish so dastardly



an act, and to revenge the death of a brother so basely murdered. He pushed within the enemy's line with his single boat, and, having succeeded in getting alongside of the retreating foe, boarded her at the head of eleven men, who were all the Americans he had left. The fate of this contest was extremely doubtful for about twenty minutes. All the Americans, except four, were now severely wounded. Decatur singled out the commander as the peculiar object of his vengeance. The Turk was armed with an espartoon, Decatur with a cutlass; in attempting to cut off the head of the weapon, his sword struck on the iron, and broke off close to the hilt. The Turk, at this moment, made a push, which slightly wounded him in the right arm and breast. He immediately seized the spear, and closed with him. A fierce struggle ensued, and both fell, Decatur uppermost. By this time the Turk had drawn a dagger from his belt, and was about to plunge it into the body of his foe, when Decatur caught his arm, and shot him with a pistol, which he drew from his pocket. During the time they were struggling on the deck, the crews rushed to aid their commanders, and a most sanguinary conflict took place, insomuch that when Decatur had despatched his adversary, it was with the utmost difficulty he could extricate himself from the killed and wounded that had fallen around him.

It is with no common feelings of admiration that we record an instance of heroic courage, and loyal self-devotion, on the part of a common sailor.

During the early part of Decatur's struggle with the Turk, he was assailed in the rear by one of the enemy, who had just aimed a blow at his head which



must have proved fatal; at this fearful juncture, a noble-hearted tar, who had been so badly wounded as to lose the use of his hands, seeing no other means of saving his commander, rushed between him and the uplifted sabre, and received the blow on his own head, which fractured his skull. We love to pause and honour great actions in humble life, because they speak well for human nature. Men of rank and station in society, often do gallant deeds, in a manner, from necessity. Their conspicuous station obliges them to do so, or their eagerness for glory urges them on; but an act like this we have mentioned, so desperate, yet so disinterested, done by an obscure, unambitious individual, a poor sailor, can spring from nothing but nobleness of soul. We are happy to add that this generous fellow survived, and long after received a pension from government.

Decatur succeeded in getting, with both his prizes, to the squadron, and the next day received the highest commendation, in a general order, from Commodore Preble. When that able officer was superseded in the command of the squadron, he gave the Constitution to Captain Decatur, who had some time before received his commission. From that ship he was removed to the Congress, and returned home in her, when peace was concluded in Tripoli. On his return to the United States, he was employed in superintending gunboats, until the affair of the Chesapeake, when he was ordered to supersede Commodore Barron in the command of that ship. When the United States was again put in commission, he was removed from the Chesapeake to that frigate.

The last war with Great Britain afforded Commo-



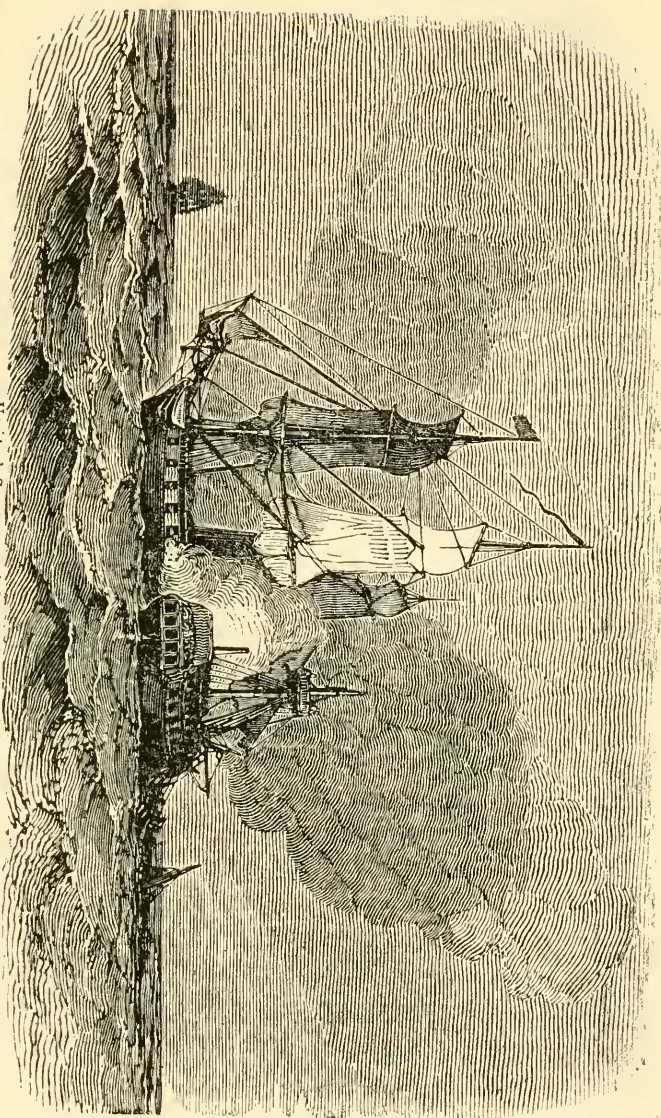
dore Decatur another opportunity of adding to the laurels which he had already won. On the 25th of October, 1812, in latitude 29, N., longitude 29, 30, W., he fell in with His Britannic Majesty's ship *Macedonian*, mounting forty-nine carriage guns, (the odd gun shifting.) She was a frigate of the largest class, two years old, four months out of dock, and reputed one of the best sailers in the British service. The action we have already described in our notice of Captain Allen, and it is only necessary here to remark, that after lasting an hour and a half, in consequence of the enemy being to windward, and having the advantage of engaging at his own distance, it terminated in the capture of the *Macedonian*. The British ship lost her mizenmast, fore and main-topmasts, and mainyard, and was much cut up in her hull. The damage sustained by the *United States* was not so much as to render her return into port necessary, and had Commodore Decatur not deemed it important to see his prize in, he would have continued the cruise.

The prize was carried into New York harbour and equipped as an American frigate. The whole country hailed the name of the gallant victor with enthusiastic admiration. Congress and several of the State Legislatures voted him costly presents, as testimonials of their high sense of his services.

In 1813, he attempted to gain the sea from New York, with the *United States*, *Macedonian*, and *Hornet*, through Long Island Sound; but a British squadron of superior force, compelled him to run into the Thames river, in Connecticut, and he lay off New London for several months, unable to run to sea.



United States and Macedonian.









Impatient of being thus cooped up within sight of the ocean, yet unable to reach it, he sent a challenge to Sir Thomas M. Hardy, commander of the blockading squadron, offering to meet two British frigates with two of his own. But the offer was rejected, and the frigates were at length dismantled. Decatur returned to New York, took command of a squadron for the East Indies, and put to sea in the *President*, January 14th, 1815. By some mistake on the part of the pilot, the ship grounded on the bar in going out. She struck heavily for an hour and a half, greatly injuring her sailing thereby.

The next morning, Decatur discovered the British squadron to be in pursuit, consisting of the *Majestic* razee, the *Endymion*, *Tenedos* and *Pomona* frigates, and a brig. The *Endymion* was soon perceived to be the fastest ship, and, on this fact, the American commander projected a plan of escape so bold and daring, that if successful, would have raised him to the summit of naval renown. He designed to lead the *Endymion* from her companions, board with all his crew, destroy or abandon the *President*, and escape in his prize. But the enemy suspected the *ruse*, and carefully avoided it, by keeping the advantage of his position. Satisfied that he could throw the *Endymion* out of the combat before the other ships could aid her, Decatur tacked about and made battle, crippled the enemy, silenced her battery, and then pursued his course as before. But by this time the other ships had approached, and opened their fire on the *President*. Escape was impossible. To strive against the squadron with his single vessel, would



have been an unjustifiable risk of the lives of his men. Nothing was left, therefore, but to strike colours, and surrender to the British commander.

Soon after this action, Decatur returned to the United States, and was immediately despatched to the Mediterranean, to chastise the Algerines for their ravages upon our commerce, which the war with Great Britain had furnished them so favourable an opportunity of committing.

He captured an Algerine frigate bearing forty-nine guns, and a brig of twenty-two guns; and on the 22d June, 1815, arrived before Algiers, and demanded an instant treaty. He demanded that all yearly tribute, or ransom, for prisoners, should be relinquished; that all property taken from Americans should be restored or paid for; that all Americans now in slavery should be liberated, and none ever again held as slaves. The Algerine negotiator demurred on the point of relinquishing tribute, contending that it might be employed as a precedent by the powers of Europe, and prove destructive to the Dey. "Even a little powder," said he, "might prove satisfactory." "If," replied Decatur, "you insist upon receiving powder as tribute, you must expect to receive balls with it." The Algerine government negotiated in forty-eight hours, and granted to Americans immunities and privileges never before obtained by a Christian power from any Barbary State.

Decatur obtained redress in a similarly summary manner at Tunis and Tripoli, and, having thus fulfilled his commission, he returned home in the autumn of the same year.



At a subsequent period he was created Navy Commissioner, and made his residence in the city of Washington, at Kalorama, formerly occupied by Joel Barlow.

We now approach, with painful emotions, the last sad act of Decatur's life, which resulted in an untimely and lamented death. In October 1819, certain expressions said to have been used by Commodore Decatur, disrespectful to Commodore Barron, led to a correspondence between these two officers. The keen sarcasm of Decatur heightened the affront, and though both parties reprobated duelling, yet this controversy terminated most unhappily in a duel. The meeting took place at Bladensburg, on the morning of the 22d of March, 1820. Both were wounded at the first fire. The wound of Barron was dangerous—that of Decatur, mortal. The unfortunate officer was conveyed to his distracted wife, at Washington, and died the same evening. An immense concourse, consisting of nearly the whole male population of Washington and the adjacent country; most of the officers of government, members of Congress, and Foreign Ministers resident there, attended his remains to the grave.

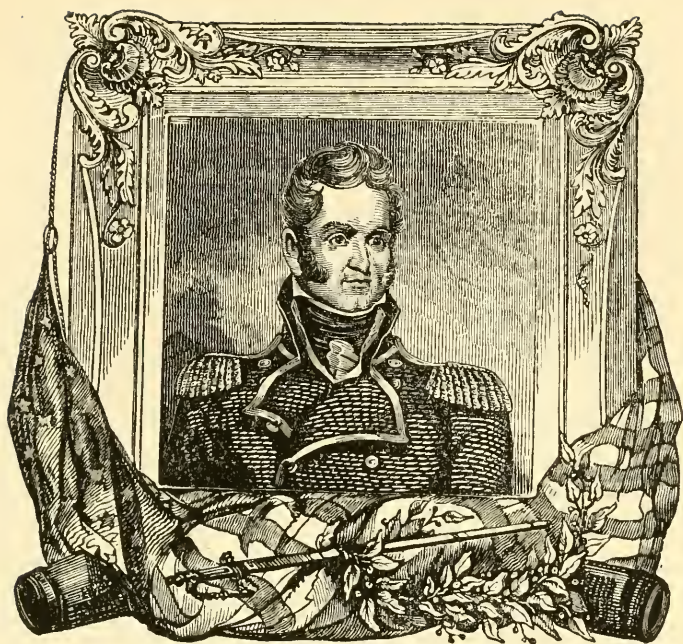
Decatur was the favourite of the navy. Since the heroic epoch of the Revolution, no commander has won a more brilliant reputation. In bravery, he had no superior; in native intellectual abilities, few equals. He was beloved by all who enjoyed the advantage of his personal acquaintance, and his popularity with those over whom he was placed in command was unbounded. After his first grand exploit at Tripoli, no



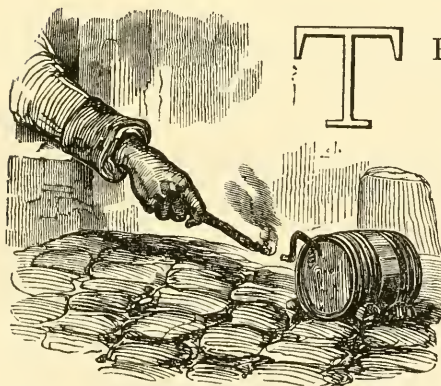
success of his valour ever excited surprise. The most daring achievements were regarded as matter of course wherever he led. Would to Heaven that the gratitude of his country, as evinced towards his family, had been as unmeasured as its confidence in himself!







THOMAS MACDONOUGH.



**T**HOMAS MACDONOUGH, the father of CAPTAIN THOMAS MACDONOUGH, was an eminent physician, who resided at a farm called The Trapp, in the county of New Castle,

Delaware. In the year 1775, he entered the army, and was appointed a major in a regiment raised by



the State of Delaware, of which Mr. John Haslett was colonel, and the late Gunning Bedford, lieutenant-colonel. Major Macdonough, from what cause is not known, retired early from the army, and returned to the Trapp. After the establishment of our independence, he was appointed a judge, and held that office till his death, which took place in 1796. He left several children, of whom three were sons. The oldest, James, was a midshipman, under Commodore Truxtun, when he took the *Insurgente*, in which engagement he received a wound from a musket ball, that rendered the amputation of his leg necessary. "James"—says the gentleman who furnished us with these particulars—"was very brave. He was placed in the tops when he was wounded, and he told me that when the men in the tops were lowering him down, he could distinctly see the enemy aiming and firing at him." The amputation of his leg rendered it necessary for him to retire from the service.

After the death of his father, young Macdonough, the subject of this memoir, obtained a midshipman's warrant. Of the vessels in which he served, the time of his promotion to a lieutenancy, and other ordinary circumstances of the life of every naval officer, we have not allowed ourselves sufficient space to give a minute detail.

He followed the fortunes of our little fleet in the wars of Tripoli, and, like other young officers who, on that occasion, first met "grim visaged war" face to face, was frequently engaged in those conflicts where the Christian and Mahometan prowess was so severely tried. Though, at this time, grave, re-



served and circumspect in a remarkable degree, we are told, he was then remarkable for a daring impetuosity, an invincible chivalrous sort of perseverance in every kind of adventure. In 1806, he was first lieutenant of the *Siren*, then lying in Gibraltar harbour, under the late Captain John Smith. A circumstance took place here, which, as it strongly displays that firmness which is the strong feature of his character, we will detail particularly. It is derived from the most undoubted authority; and when we consider what a vast difference is observable in our feelings now and at that time, we cannot help greatly admiring the conduct of the young lieutenant.

During the forenoon of a day, in which Captain Smith was on shore, a merchant brig, under the colours of the United States, came into port, and anchored ahead, and close to the *Siren*. Soon after, a boat was sent from a British frigate then lying in the harbour, on board this brig. After remaining alongside a little while, the boat returned *with one man more than she went with*. This circumstance attracted the notice of Macdonough, who sent Lieutenant Page on board the brig to know the particulars of the affair. Mr. Page returned with information that the man had been impressed by the boat from the British frigate, although he had a protection as an American citizen. Immediately on the receipt of this information, Macdonough ordered the *Siren's* gig to be manned and putting himself in her, went in pursuit of the boat, determined to rescue his countryman. He overtook her, alongside the British frigate, just as the man at the bow was raising his boathook to reach the ship, and took out the American by force,



although the other boat had eight oars, and his only four, and carried him on board of the Siren.

When the report of this affair was made to the captain of the British frigate, he came on board the Siren in a great rage, and desired to know how Macdonough dared to take a man from one of His Majesty's boats. The lieutenant, with great politeness, asked him down into the cabin; this he refused, at the same time repeating the same demand, with abundance of threats. The Englishman threw out some threats that he would take the man by force, and said he would haul the frigate alongside the Siren for that purpose. To this Macdonough replied, "he supposed his ship could sink the Siren, but, as long as she could swim, he should keep the man." The English captain said to Macdonough—"You are a very young man, and a very indiscreet young man: suppose I had been in the boat—what would you have done?" "I would have taken the man, or lost my life." "What, sir! would you attempt to stop me, if I were now to attempt to impress men from that brig?" "I would; and to convince yourself I would, you have only to make the attempt." On this the Englishman went on board his ship, and shortly afterwards was seen, bearing her in a direction for the American merchant brig. Macdonough ordered his boat manned and armed, got into her himself, and was in readiness for pursuit. The Englishman took a circuit round the American brig, and returned again to the frigate. When Captain Smith came on board, he justified the conduct of Macdonough, and declared his intention to protect the American seaman.



During the continuance of the Tripolitan war, our ships occasionally visited the city of Syracuse, once so famous, but now mouldering away, under that wretched system of government which has blasted and withered one of the fairest portions of this earth.

Robberies and assassinations are the nightly amusements of Syracusans, and our officers in their evening rambles, were frequently assailed by soldiers, or fellows armed with knives or daggers. Their favourite mode of fighting is to blow out the candles, and, in that situation, their knives and daggers are the most dangerous of all weapons. On one occasion, which occurred in Syracuse, Macdonough was attacked by three of these desperadoes; with his back against a door, he had the good fortune to wound two, and the other took to his heels. He was followed by the lieutenant, who pushed him so hard that he climbed up to the roof of the barracks, whither Macdonough followed him still, and, finding no other means of escape, he jumped off, with the loss of his life.

In the interval between the Tripolitan war and that which commenced in 1812, no occasion occurred to our naval officers for signalizing themselves, and we shall pass silently over this period of Lieutenant Macdonough's life, because it furnishes no incident of sufficient importance to be interesting to the reader.

Among the younger officers of the navy who were ordered on lake service during the war, was Macdonough. His station was Lake Champlain; and here he was destined to perform a service which has rendered his name one of the most illustrious in our naval annals.



Towards the close of the summer of 1814, it became apparent that the enemy meditated an important movement on the frontiers of New York and Vermont. Large bodies of troops—veterans who had seen service in the Peninsular war—were poured into Canada, and it was known that a heavy detachment under General Prevost were advancing upon Plattsburg. A regular force quite inadequate to resist the attack were awaiting it, under the command of General Macomb. This able officer made the best disposition of his troops which circumstances would permit; and the militia from the neighbouring regions were coming in to his support.

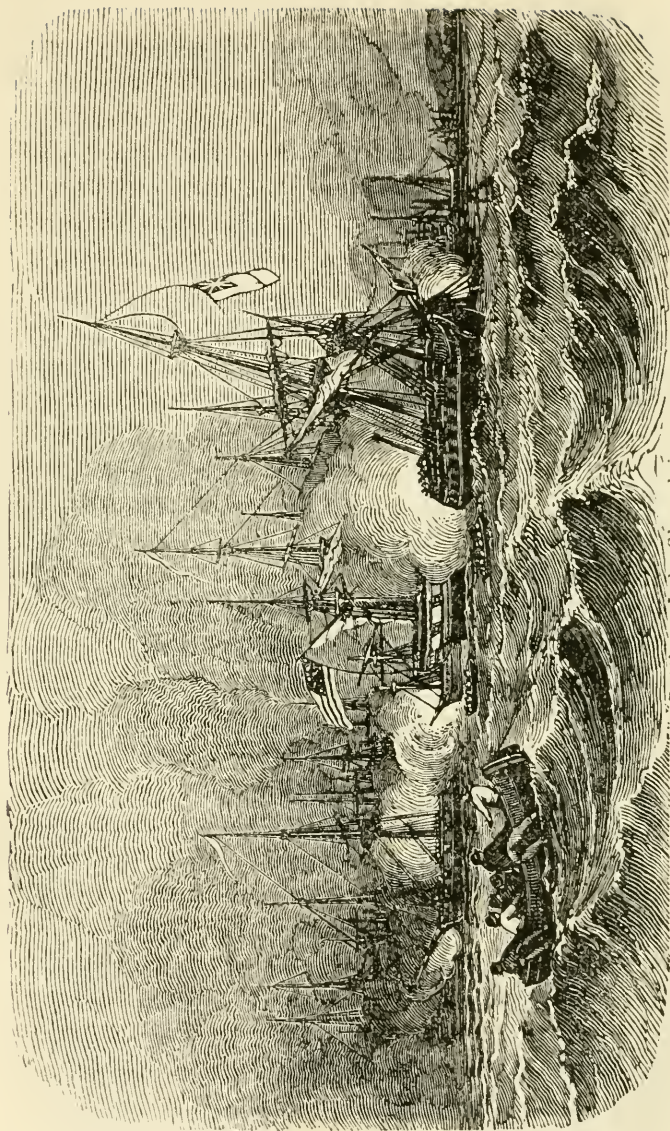
Simultaneously with their operations on land, the enemy were preparing for a decisive action on the Lake; and Macdonough put the fleet under his command in readiness for receiving him. His force consisted of the *Saratoga*, twenty-six guns; the *Eagle*, twenty guns; the *Ticonderoga*, seventeen guns; the *Preble*, seven guns; and ten galleys, carrying sixteen;—in the whole, eighty-six guns.

The British force was greater; the frigate *Confiance*, thirty-nine guns; the *Linnet*, sixteen guns; the *Finch*, eleven guns; and thirteen galleys, carrying eighteen guns;—in all, ninety-five guns; nine more than were in the American fleet; their complement of men was much greater. The calmness of this Lake permitted heavy armaments in comparatively light vessels; and of this circumstance the British availed themselves to the utmost, giving their commodore a ship equal in force to the *President* or the *Constitution*, with which he—being a veteran commander—made sure of capturing the young officer,









Battle on Lake Champlain.



ranking as lieutenant, who was his opponent in a flag ship of twenty-six guns. But "the race is not always to the swift, nor the battle to the *strong*." Skill, discipline, address, seamanship and coolness go for something; and in this battle they were put in requisition with admirable effect against superior force, and the daring manœuvre of coming down head on upon an enemy's line.

The assaults of the British were simultaneously made by land and water, on the 11th of September. At eight o'clock in the morning, the British fleet was seen approaching; and, in an hour, the action became general. It is thus described by Macdonough, in his official letter:

"At nine," he says, "the enemy anchored in a line ahead, at about three hundred yards distant from my line; his ship opposed to the *Saratoga*; his brig to the *Eagle*, Captain Robert Henley; his galleys—thirteen in number—to the schooner, sloop and a division of our galleys; one of his sloops assisting their ship and brig; the other assisting their galleys; our remaining galleys were with the *Saratoga* and *Eagle*."

"In this situation, the whole force on both sides became engaged; the *Saratoga* suffering much from the heavy fire of the *Confiance*. I could perceive, at the same time, however, that our fire was very destructive to her. The *Ticonderoga*, Lieutenant commandant Cassin, gallantly sustained her full share of the action. At half past ten, the *Eagle*, not being able to bring her guns to bear, cut her cable, and anchored in a more eligible position, between my ship and the *Ticonderoga*, where she very much annoyed



the enemy, but, unfortunately, leaving me much exposed to a galling fire from the enemy's brig.

"Our guns on the starboard side being nearly all dismounted or unmanageable, a stern anchor was let go, the bower cable cut, and the ship winded, with a fresh broadside on the enemy's ship, which soon after surrendered. Our broadside was then sprung to bear on the sloop, which surrendered about fifteen minutes afterwards. The sloop which was opposed to the *Eagle*, had struck some time before, and drifted down the line. The sloop that was with their galleys had also struck. Our galleys were about obeying with alacrity the signal to follow them, when all the vessels were reported to me to be in a sinking state. It then became necessary to annul the signal to the galleys, and order their men to the pumps. I could only look at the enemy's galleys going off in a shattered condition, for there was not a mast in either squadron that could stand to make sail on. The lower rigging being nearly shot away, hung down as though it had just been placed over the mastheads.

"The *Saratoga* had fifty-five round shot in her hull; the *Confiance*, one hundred and five. The enemy's shot passed principally over our heads, as there were not twenty whole hammocks in the nettings, at the close of the action, which lasted without intermission two hours and twenty minutes.

"The absence and sickness of Lieutenant Raymond Perry left me without the assistance of that excellent officer. Much ought fairly to be attributed to him for his great care and attention in disciplining the ship's crew, as her first lieutenant. His place



was filled by a gallant young officer, Lieutenant Peter Gamble ; who, I regret to inform you, was killed early in the action."

The Saratoga was twice set on fire during the action, by hot shot from the *Confiance* ; but the flames were soon extinguished.

It is well known that the result of this victory was the utter disheartening of General Prescott and his army, and their instantaneous retreat. So sensible were the people of New York and Vermont of the fact that the good conduct of Macdonough had saved them from the ravages of an invading army, that they, by the action of their representatives, made him large grants of lands in the neighbourhood of the Lake. The cities of New York and Albany followed the example. He was promoted to the rank of post captain, and received from Congress a gold medal, in commemoration of the victory.

"From the close of the war to the time of his decease, he shared the honours of the home and foreign service with his compeers. He was an excellent member of courts martial, for he brought to those tribunals a candid mind, ever ready to find matters that made in favour of the accused as well as against him. We have an opportunity of speaking from an intimate acquaintance with the fact, that on several courts martial, the accused have congratulated themselves, that all that was brought against them was to be considered by such a mind as Macdonough's ; at the same time, they were not wanting in justice to other honourable members.

"For several years before his death, he made his home in Middleton, Connecticut, where he had mar-



ried Miss Shaler, a lady of a highly respectable family in that place. He died of a consumption, on the tenth day of November, 1825. His wife had paid the debt of nature a few months before him.

“In person, Macdonough was tall, dignified, and commanding. His features were pleasing; his complexion, hair and eyes were light; but there was such a firmness and steadfastness in his look as to take away all appearance of the want of masculine energy, which is often attached to the idea of a delicate complexion. The great charm of his character was the refinement of his taste, the purity of his principles, and the sincerity of his religion; these gave a perfume to his name, which the partial page of history seldom can retain for departed warriors, however brilliant their deeds.”\*

\* Portrait Gallery.





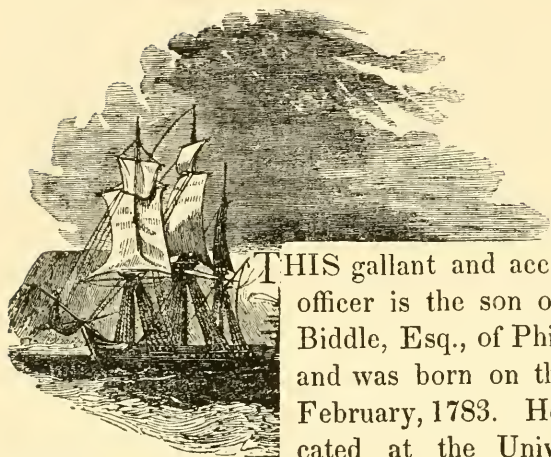








## JAMES BIDDLE.



THIS gallant and accomplished officer is the son of Charles Biddle, Esq., of Philadelphia, and was born on the 18th of February, 1783. He was educated at the University of Pennsylvania, where he made great progress in classical studies, and acquired a taste for literature, which, in the intervals of professional duty, he has since assiduously cultivated.

In the year 1800, the navy of the United States offered the most brilliant prospects to the aspiring youth of our country. It had acquired fame in the war with France, and, under the favour of the government, was rapidly increasing. The success of Captain Truxtun in his actions with the French frigates *Insurgente* and *Vengeance*, had conferred glory upon himself and given new eclat to the navy. To this distinguished commander, Mr. Charles Biddle entrusted the care of his two sons, James and Edward. On quitting the University, they obtained midship-



men's warrants; were attached to the frigate *President*, then fitting at New York, and sailed for the West Indies, in the month of September, 1800. In consequence of the cessation of hostilities with France, their cruise was of short duration, nor did it afford any opportunity for an engagement. It was rendered fatally memorable, however, to the subject of this memoir and to his family, by the melancholy loss of Mr. Edward Biddle, who died at sea of a fever, after a short illness. The extraordinary genius and acquirements of this young gentleman, had given him an exalted name among his cotemporaries. To his friends he was endeared by the possession of the most amiable and attractive qualities, the kindest feelings, and the warmest sensibility, united with the utmost fearlessness of character, and a disposition the most generous, frank, and high-minded.

On the return of the *President* to the United States, 1801, the navy was reduced to a small peace establishment, in which Mr. Biddle was retained as a midshipman. Early in 1802, he sailed to the Mediterranean in the frigate *Constellation*, Captain Murray. The object of our squadron in that sea was to protect American vessels chiefly against Tripoline cruisers. In performing this service, the *Constellation* visited a great variety of places. The islands and shores of the Mediterranean present many interesting remains of antiquity, and Mr. Biddle, availing himself of all his opportunities of observing them, was frequently enabled to indulge the enthusiasm of a scholar when he treads upon classic ground.

As the seamen in the United States service were at that time enlisted for one year only, the cruises of



our public vessels were rarely protracted beyond that period. The *Constellation*, therefore, returned home in the spring of 1803, was dismantled and laid up at Washington. Mr. Biddle was transferred to the frigate *Philadelphia*, Captain Bainbridge, and sailed again for the Mediterranean in July, 1803. The fate of this unfortunate ship is well remembered. On the 31st October, 1803, off the coast of Tripoli, she struck upon a rock not laid down in any charts extant, and unknown to any of our vessels which had previously frequented that coast. After every effort to get her afloat had failed, and all resistance to the enemy's gunboats had become unavailing, the colours of the *Philadelphia* were hauled down, and Mr. Porter, the first lieutenant, and Midshipman Biddle were despatched to inform of their surrender. As they approached the Tripoline gunboats they were hailed and ordered by each one to his own vessel. One of them fired a shot at the American boat, and Lieutenant Porter, inferring that he who fired was the commanding officer, rowed towards him, though his gunboat was at a greater distance. The nearer gunboats finding the American barge passing them, manned their boats to take possession of her. As they were coming alongside, Lieutenant Porter and Mr. Biddle were prepared to deliver up their swords, but this ceremony was dispensed with. Nearly twenty men of ferocious appearance, armed with sabres, pistols, and muskets, jumped into the boat, and at once commenced their work of insult and of plunder. Two of them snatched Mr. Biddle's sword, pulled off his coat, and began to fight for it, until at length, probably to decide their dispute, they returned



it to him. His cravats were violently torn from his neck, his waistcoat and shirt opened, and his breast exposed, for the purpose, as he very naturally inferred, of perpetrating their horrid vengeance; though their intention, it appeared, was only to search for valuables that might be concealed about his person. They searched all his pockets, and took all his papers and money, except twenty dollars in gold, which he had slipped into his boots and thereby secured. The officers and crew of the boat were then carried on shore, conducted amidst the shouts and acclamations of a barbarous rabble to the palace gates, and ushered into the presence of the bashaw, who, seated in state, and surrounded by his ministers and his guards, was ready to receive them in the audience chamber. He asked a variety of questions, principally about the ship and the American squadron. In this situation, ignorant of the fate of their companions, and doubtful of their own, they continued a considerable time, until at length the remaining officers and crew, after being plundered and stripped of almost all their clothes, were hurried in a tumultuous manner from the ship, and having been inspected by the bashaw, were conducted to the place assigned for their safe-keeping.

There is scarcely any subject which the imagination can present to us more full of horror than that of slavery among the barbarians of Africa. Such was the impression of the prisoners themselves, as well as of their countrymen. It will readily be believed, therefore, that no event ever excited more feeling in this country, than the loss of the frigate *Philadelphia*, and the captivity of her officers and crew. Their story has been frequently told, and



although no violence was offered to their persons, yet a close and rigorous confinement, the want of air, of exercise, and of employment—perpetual uncertainty in regard to their fate, and occasional threats by the bashaw of his vengeance, were circumstances calculated to impair the health and break the spirits of the strongest and most resolute. Yet they preserved their health and their spirits unbroken. Happily the officers were confined together, and, being strongly attached to their commander and to each other, they lived in the greatest harmony and mutual confidence. It was a point of honour to be firm and cheerful, to disregard the threats of the barbarians, and to sustain by an unconquerable fortitude the character of their country. The solicitude of Mr. Biddle's family induced them to take some steps for his private ransom, but he discountenanced these attempts, and declared that until his country should wholly abandon them, he would share the fortunes of his fellow prisoners. His opinion uniformly was that their release might and ought to be obtained by a proper exertion of the force of the United States. Among the circumstances which alleviated the condition of the prisoners, it would be unjust to omit the kind and unremitted attentions of the Danish consul, Mr. Nissen, rendered at all times, in every practicable way, and often at a very great personal hazard. To Sir Alexander Ball, the British governor of Malta, Mr. Biddle had delivered letters of personal introduction, and, during his confinement, that gallant officer and amiable man was very attentive to him. He maintained a friendly correspondence with Mr. Biddle, interested the British consul



at Tripoli in his behalf, and furnished him with occasional supplies from Malta that were highly acceptable.

After a confinement of more than nineteen months, the prisoners obtained their liberation in consequence of the peace with Tripoli, and in the month of September, 1805, Captain Bainbridge and Mr. Biddle, who had not separated since the loss of the frigate, returned together to Philadelphia. They had arrived at Hampton Roads and travelled northward by land, and such was the public sympathy towards Captain Bainbridge and his officers, united with the opinion entertained of their good conduct, that they were received every where on their route with the greatest marks of distinction.

A court of inquiry, which had been previously held in the Mediterranean, completely justified the surrender of the ship; nor is, indeed, any thing further now necessary to satisfy the country that its flag was not weakly defended on that occasion, than to repeat the names of Bainbridge and Porter and Jones and Biddle, who were among the officers of the Philadelphia.

Upon his release from captivity, Mr. Biddle was promoted to a lieutenancy, and after remaining at home but a few weeks, he was ordered to the command of one of the gunboats, then lying at Charleston. He cruised for some time on the southern coast, which had been infested by privateers, in company with the frigate Adams, and afterwards in company with the brig Hornet; he was also employed by order of the navy department in making a survey of the harbour of Beaufort, South Carolina. The principal



rendezvous was the port of Charleston. Here Lieutenant Biddle received, besides the usual hospitality of the place, the most distinguished civilities as the nephew of Captain Nicholas Biddle, who had been extensively known and highly respected there during the Revolutionary war, and whose last expedition had been fitted out at that port.

He remained on this station during the winter of 1805-6, and until the month of June; when, finding the gunboat service very inactive and irksome, he obtained a furlough and proceeded to Philadelphia. Here he continued until the following spring; when he made a voyage to China as first officer of a merchant ship. While absent on this voyage, the embargo law was passed, and immediately on his return he was placed under the command of Commodore Murray, in the Delaware flotilla, employed to enforce the embargo. The gunboat service was almost the only one in which our officers could find employment at that period, the Chesapeake being the only frigate in commission. But in January, 1809, Congress authorised the equipment of several of the frigates, and Captain Bainbridge being appointed to command the *President*, selected Mr. Biddle as his second lieutenant. When Captain Bainbridge, in May, 1810, obtained a furlough and relinquished the command of the *President*, Lieutenant Biddle was directed to take charge of the *Syren* sloop of war, whose commander was sick on shore, and carry her from Philadelphia to Hampton Roads; he there quitted the *Syren* on the recovery of her captain, and joined the *Constitution* frigate, Captain Hull. At this time the minds of our naval officers were strongly excited



against the British, in consequence of the attack on the frigate Chesapeake, and other subsequent events of an irritating nature. A British frigate had been cruising off the capes of Virginia, and, as it was known that the President was about to put to sea, and the impression very generally among the officers was, that in case of meeting a British frigate a battle would take place, Lieutenant Biddle applied to Commodore Rodgers to be ordered to the President, which was then short of her complement of lieutenants. He accordingly went on board that ship, which sailed in a day or two after, but did not meet any British cruiser. The President being laid up at New London for the winter, Lieutenant Biddle left her, and soon after made a voyage to Lisbon. In December, 1811, he sailed as bearer of despatches from our government to the American minister in France, and remained in Paris nearly four months, during which he was presented to the Emperor Napoleon, and attended all the parties given at the Thuilleries.

In these active and diversified scenes, many opportunities occurred, both on public duty and in private life, to display a character of firmness and decision, jealous of personal honour, and aspiring to deeds of enterprise and of fame.

Very soon after his return from France, the war took place between the United States and Great Britain. When the news of its declaration reached Philadelphia, Lieutenant Biddle was not attached to any vessel, and being extremely anxious to avail himself of the first chance of service, he repaired immediately to New York, in order to volunteer his



services to Commodore Rodgers, who then commanded the frigate *President*. On his arrival, he found, to his extreme disappointment, that the *President* had sailed but a few hours before, and in company with all the vessels of the squadron, except the frigate *Essex*, which was then not quite in readiness for sea. To Captain Porter, Lieutenant Biddle next applied to be received on board the *Essex*, and this gallant officer readily accepted his services. But, unfortunately for Lieutenant Biddle, he was superior in rank to all the lieutenants of the *Essex*, who were very naturally unwilling to receive an officer by whom they would be outranked. To their representations on the subject, Captain Porter could not, from motives of justice as well as delicacy towards his officers, be indifferent, and Lieutenant Biddle saw the *Essex* put to sea without his being able to share in the dangers and glory of her cruise.

Disappointed in his most ardent wishes at the moment when he expected to realise them, he now hastened to the city of Washington and solicited employment. But there being no public vessels in commission within the United States, he then requested from the Secretary an order to join one of the frigates on their return into port : but all of them had their full complement of officers. He therefore returned to Philadelphia, mortified at the failure of all his efforts to get to sea. From this despondency he was relieved by the arrival, in the *Delaware*, of the sloop of war *Wasp*, Captain Jones, with despatches from France. This vessel had not her full complement of officers, and Lieutenant Biddle im-



mediately procured an order to join her as first lieutenant.

The Wasp went to sea on the 13th of October, 1812, and on the 18th fell in with and captured the British sloop of war Frolic. As we have given a full account of this action, in the life of Commodore Jones, we must refer the reader to page 191, where he will notice the details of the action, and the conspicuous part taken in it by Lieutenant Biddle, who was ordered to take charge of the prize.

Soon after the action the two vessels separated, and, in a few minutes more, the Frolic's mainmast and foremast went by the board; her bowsprit had been carried away by running foul. Lieutenant Biddle was ordered by Captain Jones to rig jury-masts, and make his way, with the prize, to a southern port of the United States. Unfortunately, however, a large ship hove in sight, to windward, which proved to be the Poictiers, a British seventy-four, and as the Frolic was totally dismasted, and the Wasp so disabled in her rigging, and in her sails, as to be incapable of escaping immediately, both vessels were taken by the Poictiers. Captain Jones and his officers were carried to Bermuda, and after a short detention there, were released upon their parole, and returned to the United States.

It is difficult to describe the exultation produced in this country, by a victory so decisive over a British vessel of superior force. Public honours were liberally, and most justly awarded to Captain Jones. Of the part borne in this memorable action by Lieutenant Biddle, it is only necessary to add the follow-



ing extract from the official letter of Captain Jones. "Lieutenant Biddle's active conduct contributed much to our success, by the exact attention paid to every department during the engagement, and the animating example he afforded the crew by his intrepidity."

The legislature of his native state, voted Lieutenant Biddle a sword, and the thanks of the Commonwealth of Pennsylvania, for his distinguished gallantry and skill. By a resolution of the legislature of Maryland, the governor of that state was requested to address letters to Captain Jones and Lieutenant Biddle, expressive of the very high sense entertained of their conduct and services, in the capture of the British sloop of war *Frolic*, of superior force. The Pennsylvania Society of Cincinnati, elected Lieutenant Biddle an honorary member of their body. A testimonial still more interesting to the feelings of Lieutenant Biddle, was offered to him by a number of highly respectable gentleman of Philadelphia. In a letter, addressed to him by their committee, they observe,

"Whilst your country confers upon you those distinguished marks of approbation, which are ever due to merit and to valour, a number of the personal friends and companions of your youth, are desirous of attesting to you their esteem, and of perpetuating the remembrance of your private worth. With this view, they have directed us, as their committee, to present to you, in their name, a silver urn, bearing upon it an appropriate inscription, and a representation of the action between the *Wasp* and the *Frolic*,



in which you so conspicuously assisted to exalt the naval character of our country.”

Congress voted a gold medal to Captain Jones, and a silver medal to each of the commissioned officers of the *Wasp*, and gave twenty-five thousand dollars to the officers and crew, for the capture of the *Frolic*.

Upon his exchange, Lieutenant Biddle was promoted to the rank of master-commandant, and received the command of the gunboats, stationed to protect the bay of Delaware from the incursions of the British. But, before the whole flotilla was completed, an opportunity of a more active command was offered by the return into port of the *Hornet* sloop of war. Captain Lawrence, in consequence of his promotion, having quitted her to command a frigate, Captain Biddle applied for, and obtained the command of the *Hornet*, then lying at New York. His orders were to join the frigate *Chesapeake*, then at Boston, and nearly ready for a cruise. These vessels were to meet at sea, and cruise together, for the purpose of intercepting the naval and military stores of the enemy, coming from England, and also their trade to the *St. Lawrence*. By the capture of the *Chesapeake*, the enemy became possessed of all the signals, and the instructions from the navy department, in consequence of which a frigate and several other vessels were despatched in pursuit of the *Hornet*. Previously to this, however, as soon as the *Hornet* was ready for sea, Captain Biddle sailed in company with the frigates *United States* and *Macedonian* from New York, through the sound,



there being a large British force then off Sandy Hook. On the first of June, they were met off the east end of Long Island by a superior force of the enemy, and chased into New London. The *Hornet* being very deep was nearly overtaken, and was obliged to start her water, in order to lighten. Our ships proceeded up the river ; were moored across it to defend themselves, and remained unmolested by the enemy. They continued, however, to blockade the mouth of the river, and a very long and tedious confinement of our little squadron was the consequence. This state of inactivity was peculiarly irksome and vexatious to Captain Biddle, who being now, for the first time, in command of a ship, was extremely anxious to measure his strength with an enemy upon equal terms. Believing that, with his small vessel alone, he could elude the blockading squadron, he solicited permission to make the attempt a very few weeks after being chased into New London ; but the views of the government for the employment of the ships did not accord with his wishes.

It could not be expected that two hostile squadrons should remain long in sight of each other, without some effort to produce an encounter, and, although our officers do not always think themselves justifiable in sending challenges, yet there is no scruple in accepting them. Early in January, 1814, the British force off New London consisted of the *Ramilies*, seventy-four, Commodore Sir Thomas Hardy ; the *Endymion* frigate, Captain Hope ; and the *Statira* frigate, Captain Stackpole. A conversation took place among these officers, in presence of an American prisoner of war, who was about to be



landed at New London, which was considered as an overture to a meeting between the two British frigates and the American frigates. The conversation was communicated by the prisoner to our officers, who readily embraced the opportunity. Captain Biddle was the negotiator on the occasion, and had an interview with Sir Thomas Hardy, on board the *Ramilies*. Sir Thomas, after taking a day to consider of it, declined the meeting; because the *Endymion's* force was inferior to that of the United States; but offered to permit the *Statira* to meet the *Macedonian*; which Commodore Decatur, for reasons stated in his answer, would not allow. Captain Biddle had volunteered his services to Commodore Decatur, to serve in either of the ships, and, in case of a meeting, would have been on board one of them.

In his first visit to Sir Thomas Hardy, on the subject of the challenge, Captain Biddle, being desirous that the *Hornet* might be brought into the combat, made many inquiries respecting the *Loup Cervier* sloop of war, (formerly the United States' ship *Wasp*,) which was daily expected to join the British squadron; when Sir Thomas at length said to him, "I suppose you want a fight with the *Loup Cervier*." This remark gave Captain Biddle the opportunity which he was seeking of expressing his wishes, and he urged very strongly the importance to the navy of both countries of having a fair, equal *challenge* fight between two such vessels. On the arrival of the *Loup Cervier* off New London, Captain Biddle received a communication from Captain Mends, her commander, stating that he also was desirous of meeting the *Hornet*, provided the commanding officers



of the two squadrons would permit it; and that if Captain Biddle would inform him of the number of souls he commanded, Captain Mends pledged his honour to limit his number to the same. Commodore Decatur would not permit Captain Biddle to acquaint Captain Mends with the number of his crew, and meet him on the terms stated, because it was understood, that in that case the *Loup Cervier* would have a picked crew from the British squadron, and Commodore Decatur would not allow such a selection to be made from his ships; nor would he suffer Captain Biddle to write to Captain Mends, in order to ascertain the number of his men, and offer to reduce the crew of the *Hornet*, if larger, to that number; because the government having fixed the complement of men to be allowed to the *Hornet*, he would not be justified in permitting a reduction. Captain Biddle, in his answer, after assuring Captain Mends, that in having expressed a wish to meet the ship under his command, he was not in the slightest degree influenced by any feeling of personal hostility towards him, then states, "I have submitted your communication to the perusal of Commodore Decatur. Commodore Decatur feels unauthorised to permit that the crew of this ship should be strengthened by a selection from any other ship under his command, since, by so permitting, he may be disabled from complying with the orders of his government. He is unwilling that an advantage denied to this ship, should be allowed to the *Loup Cervier*. I have the pleasure, however, to acquaint you, that I am authorised to communicate to you, that Commodore Decatur has given his permission, that this ship shall meet the *Loup Cervier*,



under a mutual and satisfactory pledge that neither ship receive any additional officers or men, but shall go into action with their original crews respectively. This ship mounts twenty guns; the *Loup Cervier*, at the time of her capture, mounted eighteen guns; if the armament of the *Loup Cervier* is still the same, I will take off two guns, and thus place the two ships on an equality. These terms, I trust, will be acceptable to you." Captain Biddle and his officers of course expected a meeting; but the day after his letter was delivered to Captain Mends, the *Loup Cervier* went to sea, and did not again return to her station before New London.

The enemy continued throughout the winter a close blockade of New London, and always with a force superior to that of our squadron. When the blustering weather, and the season most favourable for escaping had passed away, the government ordered the two frigates to be moved as high up the river as practicable, and, after being dismantled, their officers and crews were transferred to other stations, while Captain Biddle was directed to continue at New London for the protection of the frigates. Although this service was deemed important by the government, yet to Captain Biddle it presented a dreary prospect; he had languished nineteen months in the prison of Tripoli, while his brother officers were acquiring fame, in the active service of their country, and his present inactive situation appeared equally hopeless and mortifying; he remonstrated, though in vain, against the arrangement. The demonstration of attacking New London and the frigates up the river, which was made about this period, by a very



formidable British force, rendered it, indeed, imprudent to withdraw the protection of the *Hornet*. No attempt, however, was made by the enemy, though such preparations were made to receive him as to give every hope of his discomfiture.

When the season which was favourable for the operations of the enemy against the ships in the river had passed, and as soon as Captain Biddle thought that the protection of the *Hornet* was unnecessary to their safety, he again applied for permission to leave New London and proceed to New York. This was granted; he immediately placed the *Hornet* in the best trim for sailing, passed the British squadron in the night of the 18th of November, undiscovered, and arrived at New York, after having continued in New London river upwards of seventeen months.

On the arrival of the *Hornet* at New York, she was attached to the command of Commodore Decatur, destined for a cruise to the East Indies. The frigate *President*, Commodore Decatur, went to sea on the 14th January, 1815, leaving the sloops of war *Peacock* and *Hornet* behind to bring out the store vessel, which was not then in readiness. As soon as she was ready, they all went to sea in a gale of wind on the 23d January. Three days after, the *Hornet* separated in chase of a vessel which proved to be a Portuguese brig, and then proceeded singly towards the island of Tristan d'Acunha, which was the first place of rendezvous for the squadron. On the passage she chased and boarded every vessel that came in sight. They were only four in all, and all of them neutrals. On the morning of the 23d of March, when about to anchor off the north end of that island,



a sail was descried to the southward and eastward. As she was steering to the westward with a fine breeze from the S. S. W., she in a few minutes could not be seen for the land. The *Hornet* made sail to the eastward immediately, and, after clearing the island and again gaining sight of her, perceived her bear up before the wind. Captain Biddle shortened sail and hove to for her to come down. When she had come down and began to shorten sail, she took in her steering sails in a very clumsy manner, purposely, as it afterwards appeared, to deceive the *Hornet*. She also came down stem on as nearly as possible, lest, as the officers afterwards stated, the *Hornet* should perceive her broadside and run. In coming down in this manner, she seemed to steer rather towards the *Hornet's* stern, so that Captain Biddle thought her intention was to pass under his stern, giving him a raking broadside, and, hauling her wind, engage him to leeward, to prevent which the *Hornet* wore ship three times. "At forty minutes past one, P. M.," says Captain Biddle's official letter, "being nearly within musket shot distance, she hauled her wind on the starboard tack, hoisted English colours, and fired a gun. We immediately luffed to, hoisted our ensign, and gave the enemy a broadside. The action being thus commenced, a quick and well-directed fire was kept up from this ship, the enemy gradually drifting nearer to us, when at fifty-five minutes past one he bore up apparently to run us on board. As soon as I perceived he would certainly fall on board, I called the boarders so as to be ready to repel any attempt to board us. At the instant every officer and man repaired to the quarter-deck,









Surrender of the Penguin.



where the two vessels were coming in contact, and eagerly pressed me to permit them to board the enemy; but this I would not permit, as it was evident from the commencement of the action that our fire was greatly superior both in quickness and in effect. The enemy's bowsprit came in between our main and mizzen-rigging, on our starboard side, affording him an opportunity to board us, if such was his design but no attempt was made. There was a considerable swell, and as the sea lifted us ahead, the enemy's bowsprit carried away our mizzen-shrouds, stern-davits, and spankerboom, and he hung upon our larboard quarter. At this moment, an officer, who was afterwards recognised to be Mr. M'Donald, the first lieutenant, and the then commanding officer, called out that they had surrendered. I directed the marines and musketry men to cease firing, and, while on the taffarel, asking if they had surrendered, I received a wound in the neck. The enemy just then got clear of us, and his foremast and bowsprit being both gone, and perceiving us wearing to give him a fresh broadside, he again called out that he had surrendered. It was with difficulty I could restrain my crew from firing into him again, as he had certainly fired into us after having surrendered. From the firing of the first gun, to the last time the enemy cried out he had surrendered, was exactly twenty-two minutes by the watch. She proved to be his Britannic majesty's brig Penguin, mounting sixteen thirty-two pound carronades, two long twelves, a twelve pound carronade on the top-gallant forecastle, with swivels on the capstern and in the tops. She had a spare port forward, so as to fight both her long guns of a side.



She sailed from England in September last. She was shorter upon deck than this ship by two feet, but she had a greater length of keel, greater breadth of beam, thicker sides, and higher bulwarks than this ship, and was in all respects a remarkably fine vessel of her class. The enemy acknowledge a complement of one hundred and thirty-two men, twelve of them supernumerary marines from the Medway seventy-four, received on board in consequence of their being ordered to cruise for the American privateer *Young Wasp*. They acknowledge also a loss of fourteen killed and twenty-eight wounded; but Mr. Mayo, who was in charge of the prize, assures me that the number of killed was certainly greater."

Among the killed of the *Penguin* was Captain Dickenson, her commander, who is represented to have been a deserving and favourite officer. Not a single round-shot struck the hull of the *Hornet*, but her sides were filled with grape, and her sails and rigging much cut. The *Hornet* had but one man killed, and eleven wounded. Among the wounded were Captain Biddle severely, and Mr. Conner, the first lieutenant, dangerously.

It is always gratifying to notice the attachment of our brave tars to their commanders. Captain Biddle, in the early part of the action, had his face much disfigured by being struck twice with splinters, and, when he received the wound in the neck, from which the blood flowed profusely, the most anxious concern for him was evinced by the crew, two of whom took him in their arms to carry him below. He could scarcely disengage himself from them, and finding that he would not leave the deck, one of them stripped



off his shirt and tied it tightly about Captain Biddle's neck, so as to prevent his bleeding. Captain Biddle would not have his own wound dressed until after all his men had theirs dressed.

We cannot omit a circumstance which marks a striking and characteristic difference between the seamen of the two countries. In conversation with Lieutenant M'Donald, the surviving officer of the *Penguin*, he mentioned that soon after the commencement of the action, Captain Dickenson remarked to him, "this fellow hits us every time, we can't stand his fire; we must run him on board;" at that instant Captain Dickenson received a grape-shot in his breast, which terminated his life in a few minutes. The command devolving upon Mr. M'Donald, he said he gave orders to board, but that his men would not follow him; while the seamen of the *Hornet* were anxious and eager to board the enemy, but were prevented by their commander.

It has been stated that Captain Biddle was wounded after the enemy had surrendered. He was standing upon the taffarel, and had ordered the musketry not to fire, when one of his officers called out to him that there was a man taking aim at him. Captain Biddle did not hear this, as his back was towards the officer; but two of the marines perceiving the fellow taking aim at Captain Biddle fired at him, and he fell dead the instant after he had discharged his piece. He was not more than ten or twelve yards from Captain Biddle when he shot him; the ball struck the chin directly in front with much force, and passing along the neck, tearing the flesh, went off behind through his cravat, waistcoat and coat collar.



The Penguin being completely riddled, her foremast and bowsprit gone, and her mainmast so crippled as to be incapable of being secured, and Captain Biddle being unwilling to return into port with his prize, or to spare officers to man her, he resolved to destroy her, and she was accordingly scuttled. A few days after the action he was joined by the Peacock and the storeship. The Hornet had sustained so little injury in the action, that Captain Biddle, having bent a new set of sails, and knotted and secured his rigging, was completely ready for further service. Captains Warrington and Biddle having waited the time prescribed, without the arrival of Commodore Decatur, the Tom Bowling, storeship, was converted into a cartel to carry the British prisoners to St. Salvador, and the Peacock and Hornet sailed on the 12th April, bound round the Cape of Good Hope. On the 27th April, early in the morning, in latitude 38, 30, S., and longitude 33, E., they discovered a strange sail, to which they gave chase. As it was part of the time calm, and during the other part the wind was quite light, they did not approach the chase until the afternoon of the following day. "At forty-five minutes past two, P. M.," says Captain Biddle's official letter, "the Peacock was about six miles ahead of this ship, and observing that she appeared to be suspicious of the chase, I took in starboard steering-sails, and hauled up for the Peacock. At twenty-two minutes past three, P. M., the Peacock made the signal, that the chase was a ship of the line, and an enemy. I immediately took in all steering sails and hauled upon a wind, the enemy then upon our lee quarter, distant



about eight miles. At nine, P. M., as he was gaining upon us, and there was every appearance that he would be enabled to keep sight of us during the night, I considered it necessary to lighten the ship. I therefore threw overboard twelve tons of kentledge, part of our shot, and some of our heavy spars; cut away the sheet anchor and cable, and started the wedges of the masts. At two, A. M., the enemy being rather before our lee beam, I tacked to the westward; he also tacked and continued in chase of us. At daylight, on the 29th, he was within gunshot upon our lee quarter. At seven, A. M., having hoisted English colours, and a rear-admiral's flag, he commenced firing from his bow guns. As his shot went over us, I cut away the remaining anchor and cable, threw overboard the launch, six of our guns, more of our shot, and every heavy article that was at hand. The enemy fired about thirty shot, not one of which took effect, though most of them passed over us. While he was firing, I had the satisfaction to perceive that we slowly dropped him, and at nine, A. M., he ceased his fire. At eleven, A. M., the enemy was again coming up with us. I now, therefore, threw overboard all our remaining guns, but one long gun, nearly all our shot, all our spare spars, cut away the top-gallant fore-castle, and cleared every thing off deck, as well as from below, to lighten as much as possible. At noon, the enemy again commenced firing; he fired many shot, only three of which came on board, two striking the hull, and one passing through the jib. It is, however, extraordinary that every shot did not take effect; for the enemy, the second time he commenced firing, was



certainly within three quarters of a mile of this ship, and the sea quite smooth. I perceived from his sails that the effect of his fire was to deaden his wind, and at two, P. M., he again ceased firing. At thirty minutes past two, P. M., the wind, which had previously—and greatly to our disadvantage—backed to the southeast, hauled to the westward, and freshened up. At sundown, the enemy was about four miles astern; the wind was fresh, and we went at the rate of nine knots throughout the night, and at daylight, on the 30th, he was about twelve miles astern, still in chase of us. At thirty minutes past nine, A. M., he took in steering-sails, reefed his topsails and hauled to the eastward, and at eleven, A. M., he was entirely out of sight. During the chase, the enemy appeared to be very crank, and I therefore concluded he must have lightened while in chase of us. I did not at any time fire our stern-chasers, because it was manifest that the enemy injured his sailing by firing.”

During this long and anxious chase, Captain Bidle, though still much indisposed and debilitated by his wound, preserved his accustomed fortitude and presence of mind. Though his situation, for many hours, under the guns of a line of battle ship, would have justified his surrender, yet he could not bring his mind to give up the ship, and his persevering and unyielding spirit was rewarded by the success which it merited, but could scarcely have expected. It is this gallant and heroic temper, which never despairs and is always master of itself, that gives its possessor a claim to much higher merit, than can be made by the ordinary efforts of courage. As their capture appeared to be almost inevitable, and the minds of



Escape of the Hornet from a British Seventy-four.









the crew were depressed, Captain Biddle called them together and addressed them: he told them that he was determined not to heave to, but to carry sail from the enemy as long as his spars were unhurt, and that if the enemy continued to fire, he had no doubt that they should escape; he told them if they were captured, he should expect them to behave properly; he encouraged them not to fear any ill usage from the enemy, and assured them that he would continue with them, and never abandon them. The effect of this address was to reanimate the spirits of the crew, and to make them all pleased and proud to resign their fate, confidently and cheerfully, to the direction of their brave commander.

After escaping from the seventy-four, the loss of her armament and other equipments rendered the *Hornet's* return into port indispensable; and as it would have been extremely hazardous to approach our coast, being without guns, boats or anchors, he concluded to go into St. Salvador, for the purpose of refitting and resuming his cruise. He arrived there on the 9th of June, and on his arrival heard of the peace with Great Britain. He returned to New York, on the 30th of July.

Agreeably to the request of Captain Biddle, a court of inquiry was held on the 23d day of August, 1815, on board the *Hornet*, in the harbour of New York, to investigate the causes of the return of that ship into port, and to inquire into the circumstances attending the loss of armament, stores, &c. The following opinion was pronounced by the court, of which Captain Evans was President: "The Court, after mature deliberation on the testimony adduced,



are of opinion that no blame is imputable to Captain Biddle, on account of the return of the *Hornet* into port with the loss of her armament, stores, &c.; and that the greatest applause is due to him for his persevering gallantry, and nautical skill, evinced in escaping, under the most disadvantageous circumstances, after a long and arduous chase by a British line of battle ship."

During his absence, Captain Biddle was promoted to the rank of post captain.

On his return, a public dinner was given to him by the citizens of New York; and a subscription was made for a service of plate, to be presented to him by the citizens of Philadelphia. Other testimonials of respect, not less due to his private worth than to his merit as an officer, were bestowed upon him.

Our limits will only permit a very summary notice of the services of Commodore Biddle, since the peace of Ghent. In 1817, he was despatched by the government, in the Ontario sloop of war, to the Columbia river, to take possession of Oregon territory. This service and a cruise in the Pacific having been performed, he returned to this country, in 1819. In March, 1822, he was sent to the West India station, in the frigate *Macedonian*, ostensibly for the purpose of suppressing piracy, but with special orders to remain for a considerable time in the port of Havana. This order, which, like several that have at various times proceeded from our government, showed a singular want of consideration for the health of the seamen employed in the navy, occasioned the loss of one hundred and three men, with the yellow fever. When it was apparent that the disease had com-



menced its ravages in the ship, Commodore Biddle sailed out of the harbour, and cruised about the islands, in order to restore health to the crew; but it was too late, and he was obliged to return home with this severe loss. He was immediately sent back to the West India station, in the frigate Congress; thus silencing the censure bestowed upon him by the newspapers for remaining so long in the port of Havana. He continued engaged in the arduous and unpleasant service of suppressing piracy until the ensuing spring. It was about this period that the government made the discovery, that the employment of frigates on this duty could be preventive only to a very limited extent, on account of the readiness with which the pirates found shelter in the small harbours and creeks of the Spanish islands. Small vessels, of very light construction, were subsequently employed with more effect.

Commodore Biddle's next service was the carrying abroad of two ministers, to their several destinations, in the frigate Congress. It will be thought by the reader rather an odd circumstance, that the same national ship should have been ordered by the government to convey our minister, Mr. Nelson, to Spain, and, at the same time, should be charged with the service of carrying out Mr. Rodney, as ambassador to Buenos Ayres, a revolted colony of Spain, whose independence had never been acknowledged by the mother country. The manifest indecorum of the proceeding was noticed by the newspapers of the time; but the service was, nevertheless, required, and it was duly performed, the cruise terminating in December, 1824.



A subsequent cruise on the South American station, from 1826 to 1828, and another in the Mediterranean, during which Commodore Biddle went to Constantinople for the purpose of signing the commercial treaty with Turkey, were his latest voyages. The last terminated in 1832. From the year 1838 to 1842, he was in charge of the Naval Asylum, near Philadelphia.

Commodore Biddle's residence, when not on foreign service, has always been the city of Philadelphia, where his well known character for courage and ability, and his uniformly frank, affable and gentlemanly deportment have endeared him to a large circle of friends.

It has been the distinguishing character of this gentleman, to exert in the public service an unwearied activity, and an ardent enterprise, which surmounted every obstacle and commanded the events of his life. Notwithstanding the difficulties and disappointments experienced by him at the commencement of the war, in procuring a station, and his confinement at New London, almost as long and as depressing as the captivity at Tripoli, yet his persevering spirit led him forward, in spite of every untoward event, in the path of glory, and crowned his exertions with success. He was a party to two of the most decisive actions of the war. The capture of the *Frolic* by the *Wasp*, not only broke the charm of British naval superiority, but showed a decided superiority in favour of America. The capture of the *Penguin* was not less decisive; and if, at the commencement of the war, the British navy was surprised, from habits of security and contempt for



their enemies, they had long before the victory of the *Hornet* learned their error and corrected their conduct. In this instance, even the enemy was utterly unable to frame an apology for his defeat, since he had come out prepared, and with unusual means, to pursue and capture an American ship of war.

The chase and escape of the *Hornet*, under the extraordinary circumstances which have been related, is considered, by competent judges, as one of the most honourable acts of which the navy can boast.







OLIVER H. PERRY.



UNDOUBTEDLY good descent is an advantage; and if a man, who has rendered his name illustrious by services to his country, derives reflected splendour from his ancestry, few have stronger claims on that score than the subject of the present biography. His great ancestor, Edmund Perry, was born in Devonshire, England, and was one of the earliest settlers of the then colony of Massachusetts. He was a public speaker of the society called Friends, and was compelled to quit



that colony on account of his religious opinions, and to seek a residence in South Kingston, Rhode Island. He had three sons, Samuel, James and Benjamin, who inherited the same religious principles with their father. Benjamin, the great grandfather, was born in the year 1673. Freeman, his youngest son, by a second marriage, was born in South Kingston, on the second day of February, in 1732, and in 1756 married the daughter of Oliver Hazard, Esq., brother to the Hon. George Hazard, lieutenant governor of the then colony of Rhode Island. The grandfather, Freeman Perry, was for many years clerk of the court, member of the legislature, judge, &c., in his native state, the duties of which various offices he discharged with great credit and ability. He died at South Kingston, in October, 1813, in the eighty-second year of his age. Christopher Raymond Perry, the father, was born December 4, 1761. Notwithstanding his youth, at the commencement of the American revolution, he took a very active part, and was often found fighting both by land and sea in the service of his country. He always acquitted himself to the satisfaction of his commanders; the post of danger was with him the post of honour. In October, 1784, he was married to Sarah Alexander, a lady born in Ireland, but of Scotch extraction; descended, on the maternal side, from the Wallaces, so celebrated in the annals of Scotland;—a name which Oliver would have borne had it not been changed to Hazard, in consequence of the sudden death of a beloved uncle. This excellent woman devoted herself to the education of her children, and formed their youthful minds to early habits of virtue and religion. So successful



was she in these attempts, that neither the glare of arms, and the pomp and bustle of a military life were able to seduce the mind of Captain Perry from those salutary impressions which he received in early youth. At the age of seven years, he was placed at Mr. Frasier's school, in Newport, and under that able and excellent teacher he made considerable progress in his studies. In April, 1799, he received a midshipman's warrant, and was attached to the United States' ship General Greene, under the command of his father, with whom he sailed until the reduction of the navy. At this time, his father received the following letter from the Hon. Secretary of the Navy:

*"Navy Department, April 3, 1801.*

"SIR:—The act providing for the peace establishment of the navy of the United States, has imposed on the President a painful duty. It directs him to select nine gentleman from amongst the captains of the navy of the United States, and to permit the remaining commanders to retire from public service, with the advance of four months' extra pay. I have deemed it a duty, therefore, as early as possible to inform you, that you will be amongst those whose services, however reluctantly, will be dispensed with. You will transmit to the accountant of the navy a statement of your account, for pay and subsistence, &c., to the 20th instant, inclusive; on receipt of which it will be adjusted, and the balance due you, including the four months' extra pay, will be transmitted to you, or paid to your order. Permit me to assure you, that the President has a just sense of the services rendered by you to your country, and that I am, with sentiments of respect,

*"Your most obedient servant,*

*"By order of Henry Dearborn, acting Secretary of the Navy.*

*"S. SMITH.*

*"Captain CHR. R. PERRY."*

On the breaking out of the Tripolitan war, Mr. Perry was ordered to join the frigate Adams, com-



manded by Captain Campbell, with whom he sailed for the Mediterranean. This frigate was then lying in the harbour of Newport, and arrived at Gibraltar on the 13th of July, 1802. Here they were met by Commodore Morris, in the Chesapeake, and Lieutenant Sterret, of the Enterprise. After waiting a month at this place, they proceeded as far as Malaga, with a convoy of merchant ships, and then returned to watch a Tripolitan ship lying at the rock of Gibraltar. Here they lay for ten months watching the Tripolitans, at which time they were joined by Commodore Preble, with the Constellation, accompanied by the New York, John Adams, and the Enterprise. Commodore Preble here shifted his flag from the Constellation to the New York, and ordered the Constellation, then commanded by Captain Barron, to the United States. On the 7th of April, Mr. Perry sailed from Gibraltar for the United States, in the frigate Adams, with a convoy of ten sail of merchantmen. They touched at Malaga, Alicant, Barcelona, and, after staying a few days at the latter place, proceeded for Leghorn, and thence to Naples. During this cruise, and on his birth-day, (at seventeen years of age,) he was promoted to an acting lieutenancy. While on the Mediterranean station, Lieutenant Perry embraced an opportunity afforded by the indulgence of his commander, of visiting many of the capital cities, and examining many of the curiosities both of Italy and Spain. He had also an opportunity of seeing whatever was worthy of notice in the Italian islands, as well as on the Barbary side. He was at Tangiers, Ceuta, Algiers, Tunis, Derne and Tripoli. From Naples the frigate sailed to Strom-



boli. Lieutenant Perry remained in the Mediterranean until Commodore Morris left that station, and with him he returned to the United States. On Lieutenant Perry's return to Newport, from this long and fatiguing cruise, he strenuously applied himself to the study of mathematics.

On the 5th of July, 1804, Lieutenant Perry was again ordered to the *Constellation*, under his old commander, Captain Campbell. This frigate was then fitting out at Washington, and destined to join our squadron at Malta, then under the command of Commodore Barron. He remained on board the *Constellation* until he was ordered by Captain Campbell as first lieutenant on board of the *Nautilus*, during the time that Captain Evans and Captain Dent assumed the command. He was attached to the *Nautilus* until Commodore Rodgers assumed the command of the American squadron, by whom he was ordered on board of his own ship, the *Constitution*, where he remained until the conclusion of peace with the regency of Tripoli. Afterwards Commodore Rodgers shifted his flag to the *Essex*, retained Mr. Perry with him as the second lieutenant, and with him he returned to the United States.

After this second Mediterranean cruise, Lieutenant Perry applied himself with redoubled diligence to the study of mathematics, and to the rudiments of navigation. He had already been conversant with practice: and he was thus enabled to read and to compare what he read with his own experience, and to improve himself both by theoretical and practical knowledge. During the embargo, he was appointed to the command of seventeen gunboats, stationed at the harbour



of New York, the duties of which he executed with his usual promptitude, industry and perseverance.

In all these incidents we may discover rather a narrative of occurrences, than a description of the character of Lieutenant Perry. None of these events have served to throw out his peculiar and distinguishing characteristics. It is time to come to more specific detail, and we shall find an intrepidity which no misfortune could disturb, surpassed only by the modesty with which it is surrounded. In the year 1810, Lieutenant Perry superseded Captain Jones in the command of the United States' schooner *Revenge*, attached to the squadron commanded by Commodore Rodgers. Lieutenant Perry received the orders of his commander to commence a survey, beginning at the westernmost extreme of Gardiner's bay, on a parallel to extend five leagues south of the south side of Long Island, and north, so as to intersect the Connecticut shore; thence as far eastward as to include the whole of Connecticut, as far as the easternmost extremity of Newport, and the harbours adjacent thereto; from which the north and south parallel of the eastern boundary of the chart was to extend so far south that the intersecting east and west parallel, forming the southern margin of the chart, would take in Gay-head and Block-island. He was, by the orders of his commander, first to survey the harbour of Newport, and then to return to New London. In the execution of this duty, the schooner was wrecked on a reef of rocks, called Watch-hill reef, at the entrance of Fisher's island sound. By the indefatigable exertions of the officers and crew, almost every thing of value was saved from the



wreck, and the life of every person on board was preserved, notwithstanding the heavy swell rendered the approach extremely difficult and hazardous. A court of inquiry was ordered by the Commodore, consisting of Captain Isaac Hull, and Lieutenants Charles Morris and Charles Ludlow; names dear to the memory of Americans. Lieutenant Perry, on his examination before the court, gave a modest and perspicuous detail; but cautiously and modestly concealed his own individual agency in attempting to save the stores and the men. In the examination of the junior officers, this fact is stated, which the court would never have learned from his own lips: "At sunset the wind changed to the northward, and blew heavy on the reef, when the sea increasing, and the vessel going fast to pieces, it was determined to leave her; and the Captain, and such part of the officers as remained on board, landed at Watch-hill—*Captain Perry being the last person that left the wreck!*" It seldom happens that an officer is first recommended to the notice and favourable regards of his government by his misfortunes. Such, however, was the case in the present instance, and Lieutenant Perry, from that hour, became a favourite in the navy department. He laid the foundation of his future celebrity in his misfortune. The following letter from the Secretary of the Navy, to the Commodore, sanctions these ideas, and one particular passage appears to be beautifully prophetic.

"Navy Department, February, 1811.

"SIR:—Your letter of the 31st ultimo, with the proceedings of the court of inquiry into the loss of the *Revenge*, has been received.

"Having attentively examined the proceedings of the court, I



derive much satisfaction from perceiving that it is unnecessary to institute any farther proceedings in the case. With respect to Lieutenant Perry, I can only say, that my confidence in him has not been in any degree diminished by his conduct on this occasion. The loss of the *Revenge* appears to be justly chargeable to the pilot. *This accident will no doubt present to Lieutenant Perry considerations that may be useful to him in future command. An officer, just to himself, will not be depressed by defeat or misfortune ; but will be stimulated by either cause to greater exertion."*

"The conduct of the officers generally, and of the crew, meets with my approbation, with only one exception, I mean acting Lieutenant ———, whose concern for himself appears to have rendered him regardless of his duty as an officer. Such occasions are calculated to excite the most active exertions for general relief, and afford opportunities of displaying a noble disinterestedness. Instead of cheering those under his command to manly exertions, it grieves me to find that this officer was inflicting unnecessary, perhaps unmerited blows upon them. Furlough him as a midshipman, until further orders from this department.

"If there should be any situation in the squadron, to which you can appoint Lieutenant Perry, that may be consistent with his just pretensions, and not interfere with the rights of others, you will appoint him to it ; if not, he is to be furloughed, waiting the farther orders of this department.

"The officers and crew having perhaps suffered in their private property, may each receive an advance of two months' pay, to afford them relief. This authority is to be exercised according to your discretion.

"You will cause this letter to be publicly read to Lieutenant Perry, his officers and crew.

"The correctness of proceeding on the part of the court of inquiry is highly approved, and to the members who compose it, you will be pleased to express this approbation.

"I am, sir, yours, &c.,

"PAUL HAMILTON.

"Com. RODGERS, New London."

On the breaking out of the war of 1812, Lieutenant Perry was appointed to the command of the United



States' flotilla, then lying in the harbour of Newport, with the rank of master-commandant. This place, however, as has been proved by subsequent events, was not destined for the theatre of active service. To a mind so enterprising and active, a mere nominal command, or, what amounts to the same thing, to an office where a brave man is, for want of opposition, incapable of distinguishing himself, is irksome and destitute of all attractions. It soon became evident, not only from the declarations made on the floor of Congress, but likewise from the movements of General Hull, that the occupation of Canada was our object. It became then a matter of primary importance to secure the possession of the lakes. Commodore Chauncey was selected for this purpose by the navy department, to whom was intrusted the superintendence and direction of all our military operations on those waters. Captain Perry was by him appointed to the command of the naval forces of the United States on Lake Erie. So attached were the men who composed his squadron lying in the harbour of Newport, to their commander, that they cheerfully followed his new fortunes, and accompanied him to Lake Erie. At the time that General Dearborn contemplated an attack upon Fort George, Commodore Perry arrived in the neighbourhood of our army on public business. This fort, it is well known, is situated at the communication between the waters of the Lakes Ontario and Erie, and just above the Falls of Niagara. Commodore Perry immediately volunteered his services, which were as promptly accepted by General Dearborn and Commodore Chauncey, and the landing of our troops intended for the attack,



was by them confided to him. The result of that action is so well known, that it is conceived unnecessary to occupy the attention of the reader by a more specific detail.

When Commodore Perry was appointed to command the United States' squadron on Lake Erie, there was no squadron for him to command. The British held the entire and exclusive possession of these waters; and to this officer was confided the important duty of creating a fleet, in the face of a proud and insolent foe. The Commodore had not only to contemplate the day as extremely dubious and distant when he should meet his enemy on fair and honourable terms on the bosom of the Lake, but likewise to guard against surprise, and to run the risk of having his navy destroyed on the stocks. He had likewise to apprehend every thing from the inexperience of his own sailors; and, it is hoped that it will not be deemed invidious to assert, from the inexperience of his officers also. The Commodore himself had never seen a naval engagement; it is true that he had *studied the theory of naval warfare*; but he had known nothing of active operations. He had never been in an engagement where a single ship was opposed to a single ship; much less could he be presumed capable of calculating all the hazards and casualties where one fleet was opposed to another. This was untried ground, and on which the Commodore, so far as regards the knowledge resulting from experience, was almost as much a novice as the most ignorant of his crew. In addition to this formidable mass of obstructions, he had to encounter the genius of Captain Barclay, a man who, to an enterprising



and active mind, had united the lessons of sober experience; he was conversant with naval science both in theory and in practice: he had served under Nelson; and in the battle of Trafalgar his wound was an evidence of his courage and intrepidity—these were the apparently unequal terms on which Commodore Perry was to cope with his gallant competitor.

These difficulties, which in ordinary minds would only excite motives of despair, were, in Commodore Perry's, subjects only of active and of persevering energy. His genius seemed to expand beneath the pressure of the foot which was raised for its extermination. To guard against the approach of the heavy vessels of the enemy, while his own fleet was upon the stocks, he selected a place denominated the harbour of Erie, which, from the shoalness of the water, was incapable of being approached by vessels loaded with heavy ordnance. This bay, by projecting into the main land, rendered the pass defensible, both by armed boats and by the militia, who, on the requisitions of the Commodore, were stationed to watch every motion of the enemy. Here, if Captain Barclay attempted to enter, he would be compelled to relinquish his maritime superiority—he would be compelled to forego his heavy ships, and to trust his strength in boats, which might be opposed by an equal force on the water, as well as by the militia, who were stationed to prevent his advances. His naval pre-eminence would now avail him nothing. Under such auspices did Commodore Perry commence the hazardous undertaking of building his fleet. Frequently were alarms excited, and, probably, for nefarious purposes promulgated, that Captain Barclay



intended an attack, and as often was the vigilance and promptitude of Commodore Perry found equal to the emergency. The militia were, by these false alarms, rendered more expert, and his own sailors were, from the same causes, trained, disciplined, and inured to their duty.

These are some, and but faint views of the difficulties which Commodore Perry had to surmount. Many minds are found capable of comprehending things in the mass, which cannot, at the same time, bear all the tedious minutiae of detail. Commodore Perry, however, was as attentive to the one as to the other. While he was revolving in his mind, and anxiously awaiting for the day when he should meet his opponent on equal terms, he superintended the whole of the preparatory arrangements, and displayed the same persevering zeal as he did in the grander scenes in which he was afterwards called to act.

On the morning of the 10th of September, 1813, Commodore Perry's fleet—consisting of the brig Lawrence, of twenty guns; the Niagara, of twenty; the Caledonia, of three; the schooner Ariel, of four; the Scorpion, of two; the Somers, of two guns and two swivels; the sloop Trippe, the schooner Tigress, and the Porcupine, carrying each one gun only, and making in the aggregate fifty-four guns—were lying in Put-in bay. The British fleet, commanded by Commodore Barclay, were discovered, consisting of the ship Detroit, carrying nineteen guns; the Queen Charlotte, seventeen; the schooner Lady Prevost, thirteen; the brig Hunter, ten; the sloop Little Belt, three; and the schooner Chippeway, one—making a difference of nine guns in favour of the



British. Commodore Perry preserving the weather-gage of his antagonist, bore up to the windward, and formed his squadron in line of battle. The enemy commenced firing, and as he mounted long twenty-four, eighteen, and twelve pounders, his fire became destructive. The Commodore observing this inequality of fire, and his own ship being the principal sufferer, made the signal for close action. The *Lawrence* was, in this situation, exposed for upwards of two hours to a fire so destructive and tremendous, that every brace and bowline was shot away, every gun rendered useless, and the greater part of her crew either killed or wounded.

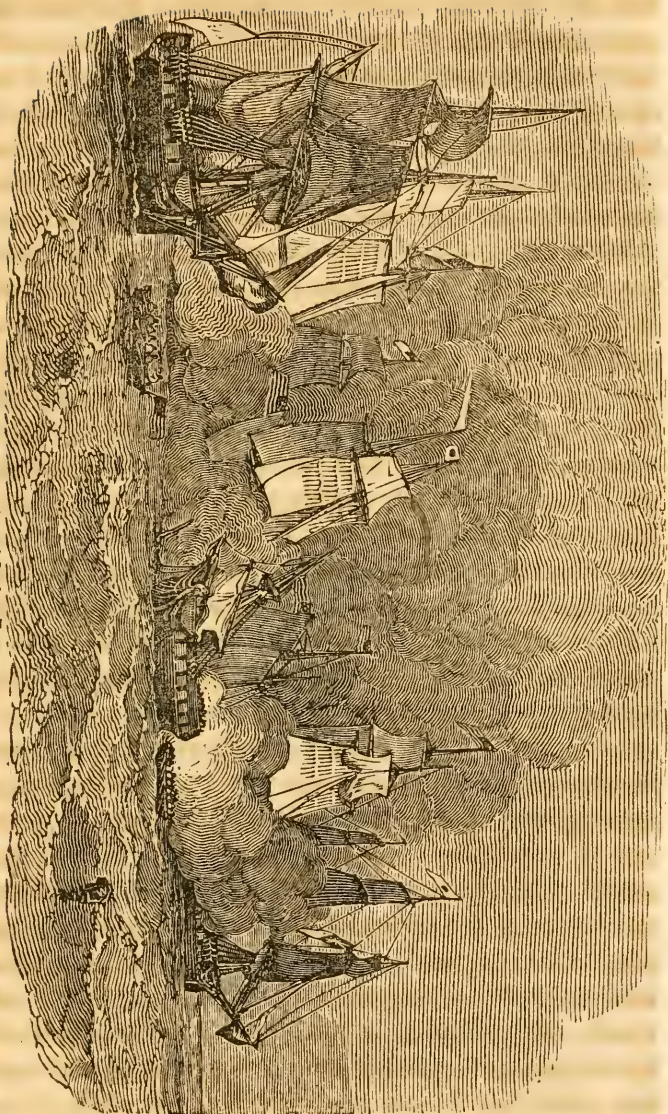
Commodore Perry lay in the *Lawrence* between the *Queen Charlotte* and the *Detroit*, with the schooners *Ariel* and *Scorpion* on his weather-bow.

While the battle was thus raging, the gunboats, on which so much depended in such a crisis, and which, from the facility of their management, were capable of such speedy and effectual annoyance of the enemy, did but little or no execution.

This is a broad outline of the action, and of the situation of the respective ships at this critical moment. Commodore Perry finding that no more effective hostility could be done in the *Lawrence*, hastily left her, in the charge of his brave and gallant lieutenant, Yarnall, and immediately proceeded on board the *Niagara*, bearing the commodore's flag, on which was inscribed the dying words of the brave *Lawrence*, "*Don't give up the ship.*" He passed the line of the enemy, exposed to the full hazard of their musketry, still standing in the boat, a marked and pointed object, until he was forcibly pulled down by



Battle of Lake Erie.









his own men. When he arrived on board of the Niagara, the crew of the Lawrence—the few remaining crew—gave three cheers, on account of the safety of their beloved commander. Commodore Perry said, addressing Captain Elliot, “Do you see those infernal gunboats—they have lost us the victory.” “No,” exclaims his confederate, “do you take command of this ship and I will bring up the boats.” This was what Commodore Perry so delicately mentions in his letter to the Secretary of the Navy, that Captain Elliot anticipated his wishes, in bringing up the boats.

A fresh breeze springing up at this moment, Commodore Perry availed himself of this favourable opportunity, and plunged through the enemy’s line, giving them a raking fire from the right and left. Captain Elliot in the mean time, having brought up the gunboats, did vigorous execution, by plying them in different directions, for which kind of naval service they are so admirably adapted. The enemy, over whom victory seemed to hover until this moment, were compelled to strike their flags; and Captain Barclay, who was fainting below, from the loss of blood, being carried on deck, agreed that nothing better could be done.

On board the Lawrence twenty-two were killed, and sixty-one wounded. On board the Niagara two were killed, and twenty-five wounded. On board the Caledonia three were wounded; and on board the Ariel two. On board the Trippe and the Scorpion two only were wounded in each—making, in the whole, one hundred and twenty-three in killed and



wounded. The number of the enemy's killed and wounded is not known.

During this sanguinary battle, the *Lawrence*, after Commodore Perry had left her, was compelled to strike her colours, but the British not being able to take possession, the flag was afterwards rehoisted.\*

It was thought by many persons in the fleet at the time of the battle, that Captain Elliot might have come into close action before Commodore Perry boarded his vessel; and Perry himself expressed this opinion, and called on the proper authorities for an official inquiry into the matter, some time after. This gave rise to a controversy which has not yet terminated, during which much nautical language, much special pleading, and many diagrams have been employed to show that if there was any fault it was Perry's, and not Elliot's. But public opinion chose to regard Perry as the hero of the day, at the time of the battle, and the lapse of nearly thirty years has not served to depress his reputation in public estimation, notwithstanding the violence with which it has been assailed. If there ever was a victory won by the extraordinary exertions of the commander-in-chief, it was this on Lake Erie. There were many circumstances against him—such as the superior force of the enemy, the sickness of many of his men, while those of the British are admitted to have been all in health, and the fact that he received no support from the *Niagara* until his own ship was disabled, and he was compelled to shift his flag. It is upon these broad and undisputable facts, that his countrymen

\* Port Folio.



have assigned him a place in the very highest rank of their naval commanders, from which detraction can never remove him. His memory and his noble character will be cherished to the latest time as a portion of the nation's inheritance of glory.

Previous to Perry's victory, there were many and incessant clamours against the war, and many, of both the friends and enemies of that measure, ventured to prognosticate that the American officers were unable to conduct a fleet in action. Every thing of this kind was now silenced, and friends and enemies of the war all united to do honour to those to whom honour was so justly due. In acknowledgment of his services in this action, Perry was promoted, and received the thanks of Congress and many state legislatures; but he rested not from his toils. The British naval force on the Lake was now subdued, and Perry quitted naval warfare for the moment, to engage and assist in the enterprises of General Harrison, on land. He assisted at the taking of the Moravian towns, on the 5th of October following his own victory.

The President of the United States, Mr. Madison, in his message to Congress, speaks of his conduct in the highest terms of praise, as reflecting honour on the nation. Captain Perry had a command on the Potomac, at the time of the taking of Washington; but it was so small as to be inadequate for the protection of the town, and no blame can, therefore, be attached to Perry. After the end of the war, Perry took part in the operations at Algiers, commanding the frigate *Java*, under Commodore Decatur, who, in June, 1815, captured an Algerine frigate, commanded



by Admiral Reis Hammida, commonly styled "the terror of the seas." After his return to the United States, in midwinter, whilst the Java was lying at Newport, he was told that a merchant vessel had gone to pieces on a reef, five or six miles from that place, and that the crew were still on the wreck, at the mercy of the winds and waves. He manned his barge, and said to the rowers—"Come, my boys! we are going to the relief of shipwrecked seamen; pull away." He was most cheerfully obeyed, and, on arriving at the vessel, found eleven men on the quarter-deck, whom they rescued. The fame of this heroic and perilous deed spread far and wide, and the great mass of his countrymen declared Perry to be as worthy of the civic as of the naval crown.

In 1819, Perry was sent in the John Adams to the West Indies, with sealed orders. He had the command of the squadron on that station. It was a command of importance, for the seas swarmed with pirates, who vexed the commerce and committed the most atrocious murders. He was not long the guardian of those seas. The yellow fever was in the squadron, and of that disease he died, August 23d, 1820, just as he was entering a port of Trinidad. Thus perished, in the prime of life, and in the midst of usefulness, one of the most gallant officers of this or any other country. He was buried on the 24th, with military honours. Every tribute of national grief was paid to his memory, in the United States, and Congress made a liberal provision for his family, including his mother, who depended on him for support.

Commodore Perry married, early in life, a daughter



of Dr. Mason, of Newport, and was happy in his domestic ties. He was a man of talents, of great tact in his profession, and every way fitted for a great naval commander. His intrepidity was the effect of nature and art combined. In his early youth he planned in imagination what he would one day become, and he very nearly fulfilled his boyish predictions. He always adapted the means to the ends, and never ventured on any thing that was not feasible. His mind was prolific, but well balanced. He never was swayed from his purposes, or "frightened from his propriety," always acting with a wisdom and gravity beyond his years, and seldom without success.

Commodore Perry was in person of a martial cast, tall and well proportioned, yet displaying a fine symmetry of limbs, and graceful movement of the body. The expression of his face was manly and intellectual, with more than ordinary traces of refinement.

The remains of Commodore Perry have been brought to Newport, and a monument has been erected to his memory by the legislature of Rhode Island.\*

\* Portrait Gallery.





## WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE.



LITTLE research is necessary to find the materials of this commander's life. It has already employed some of the ablest pens in the country; and deservedly, for among the many who have distinguished them-

selves in the youthful noon of the navy of our country, few have ranked higher than Commodore William Bainbridge. By his own merit and exertion, he raised himself from the rank of a common sailor, on a merchantman, to the highest rank of the navy, and in this responsible situation conducted himself in such a manner as to win the approval of every candid mind. The honour of his nation, the dignity of his station, the respect due his own personal character,—these were the interests he ever felt bound to support, and it was the magnanimous maintenance of these that procured him renown among his fellow-citizens.

WILLIAM BAINBRIDGE was born at Princeton, New Jersey, May 7, 1774, being descended from ancestors of high standing, who had for several generations resided in New Jersey. His father was a



physician of some eminence, who removed to the city of New York shortly after the birth of his fourth son, who is the subject of this memoir. Young Bainbridge was possessed of a bold and generous disposition and an athletic frame, and distinguished himself in every boyish undertaking where danger was to be encountered. John Taylor, his maternal grandfather, superintended his education, and early impressed on his mind the importance of those high moral sentiments which were subsequently so eminently displayed in his character and actions. At the age of fifteen, he was seized with a sudden desire to go to sea, and his importunities prevailing upon his parents, he was placed on board a merchantman about sailing from Philadelphia. When only eighteen years of age, he was promoted to the rank of first mate of a vessel in the Holland trade; and during the voyage suppressed a mutiny among the crew, and saved the life of the commander by his own intrepidity and energy of character. For this act of manly conduct, and his great nautical skill, he was appointed captain of the same vessel, at the age of nineteen.

In the year 1796, lying off Bordeaux, in command of the *Hope*, of Philadelphia, he was hailed by the officer of an American vessel, whose crew had risen in mutiny. He hastened on board and quelled the mutineers, but an accidental explosion of gunpowder had nearly cost him his life. The same year, with an armament of four guns and eleven men, he was fired upon by a British schooner, of eight guns and thirty men: after a brisk action, the enemy struck, being much injured in the hull and rigging, and having



several men killed and wounded. As it would have been illegal to take possession of the prize, Bainbridge contented himself with hailing the captain of the schooner and telling him to "go about his business, and report to his masters that if his ship was wanted they must either send a greater force or a more skilful commander."

Some time after this event, while homeward bound, his vessel was boarded by the first lieutenant of an English cruiser, and one of his men impressed, on pretence of his being a Scotchman, despite the assurances of Bainbridge to the contrary. Five days after, Bainbridge fell in with an English brig of a force superior to his own, and having seized and conveyed to his own vessel one of the English marines, he hailed the captain and informed him that "he might report that Captain William Bainbridge had taken one of his Majesty's subjects, in retaliation for a seaman taken from the American ship *Hope*, by Lieutenant Norton, of the *Indefatigable* razee, commanded by Sir Edward Pellew." The captured seaman received good wages, and was discharged as soon as he reached an American port, in no way dissatisfied with the service into which he had been thus forced.

The bravery and decision of character manifested by Captain Bainbridge, in these little affairs, engaged the notice of the Secretary of the Navy, who appointed him to the command of the *Retaliation*, a vessel lately taken as a prize from the French, by Captain Decatur, father to the renowned commodore of that name. In September, 1798, the *Retaliation*, in company with the *Norfolk* and *Montezuma*, sailed



for the West Indies, under the command of Commodore Murray. Cruising off Guadaloupe the following November, three sail were discovered to the east, supposed to be English; and two other vessels hove in sight to the westward, at the same time. Commodore Murray sailed for the latter, the Norfolk accompanying him; while Bainbridge was left to examine the cruisers to the eastward, which, instead of being British, as had been supposed, unfortunately proved to be French. One of the frigates, *L'Insurgente*, hoisted the French flag, fired upon the *Retaliation*, and ordered her to strike. The other, *Le Volontier*, ranging alongside, commanded Bainbridge to repair on board; who presented his sword immediately on reaching the deck. The Commodore, *St. Laurent*, politely declined the proffered submission, observing, "that as he had had no opportunity to defend himself, he should prefer that he would retain his sword." The two frigates immediately made sail in chase of the *Montezuma* and *Norfolk*, but as the former was a ship of some size, Commodore *St. Laurent* felt a little apprehensive of permitting *L'Insurgente*—which had far outstripped his own vessel, and was now a long distance ahead of her,—to engage single-handed with a vessel whose force might be superior to his own. He, therefore, inquired of Bainbridge as to the size of the American vessels. The shrewd Captain replied, with great coolness, that the ship carried twenty-eight twelve pounders, and the brig twenty nine pounders, thus nearly doubling their real force. This induced the Commodore to recal the *Insurgente* from the chase, the captain of which returned much chagrined, declaring that he could



have captured both in ten minutes, as there was not on either vessel a gun of more than six pounds. St. Laurent manifested great irritation at this *ruse de guerre*, but considering the deception as one of those frequently practised in war, and justified by the circumstances of the case, he recovered his good humour, and treated Bainbridge with great courtesy so long as he remained his prisoner.

The prize was carried into Basseterre, and her officers and crew ordered to a loathsome prison : but the humane interference of St. Laurent procured for the officers permission to remain on board the frigate. The governor of the island, General Desfourneaux, wished to treat with Lieutenant Bainbridge as the representative of his government, promising to liberate the officers and crew of the *Retaliation*, if he would consider the island of Guadaloupe as neutral during the war between the United States and France. Bainbridge replied that his powers extended no further than an exchange of prisoners was concerned ; that he regarded himself and crew as prisoners of war ; and complained deeply of the barbarous manner in which they were treated. The governor admitted the truth of his complaint ; promised again and again to ameliorate their condition, which was truly deplorable ; and finally placed Bainbridge and his crew in possession of the *Retaliation*, fitted out a cartel to convey other American prisoners, who had been confined in Guadaloupe, to the United States, and the two vessels set sail in company, with M. Le Blanc, the governor's bearer of despatches to the President of the United States.

Here his whole conduct was highly approved by



the government, and he was promoted to the rank of master-commandant, and put in command of the Norfolk, which his address had saved from capture. He received orders to join the cruising squadron of Commodore Truxtun, and, while on his way to the station in the West Indies, he fell in with a large, heavy, three-masted armed schooner, to which he gave chase; but his topmast being lost by carrying sail, he was obliged to put into St. Kitt's to repair. Here he took under charge a convoy of one hundred and nineteen sail, homeward bound. While on the passage, the convoy fell in with an enemy's frigate, and Bainbridge, giving signal to the convoy to disperse, drew off the frigate from the merchantmen, and occupied her till nightfall, when he gave the enemy the slip, and succeeded the next day in collecting the whole fleet.

In September, 1799, the Norfolk sailed from Sandy Hook for the West Indies, where Bainbridge received orders from Commodore Perry,—father of the renowned Oliver H. Perry,—to cruise off Hispaniola. At Cape François, he waited on General Toussaint, who received him with great politeness, and accepted his invitation to visit him on board his ship. Bainbridge, in return, was invited to dine with Toussaint, and, during the conversation, the General inquired of him how he meant to dispose of the prisoners taken from the brigand Riego; offering, at the same time, to take charge of them, if Captain Bainbridge were willing. Being asked how he proposed to treat them, he replied that he would drum them out, and shoot them; upon which Captain Bainbridge assured him that if he were to accede to his wishes he would



be in danger of being shot himself by his own government. On the 31st October, the Norfolk, with her guns housed, and otherwise disguised as a merchantman, was pursued by an armed barge, which Bainbridge permitted to approach till within gunshot, when he turned about and poured into her a deadly broadside. There being a calm, the barge succeeded in escaping to shore, where the boat of the Norfolk pursued and captured her, finding six dead or dying in and about the boat. Eight days after, the Norfolk took the French lugger Republican, with her prize, a sloop loaded with coffee. The lugger was destroyed, and her prize sent in. Shortly after, Bainbridge received orders to cruise off Havana, where he was joined by two other sloops of war, the Warren and the Pinckney. The whole force was placed under his command, and was well employed in protecting the commerce of the United States till March, 1800, when his cruise being up, he returned home, and anchored off Philadelphia.

His conduct was so favourably regarded by the President, that he was promoted to the rank of captain—the highest then existing in the navy; and in the following May appointed to the command of the George Washington, with orders to carry tribute to the Dey of Algiers. Having arrived at Algiers and presented the tribute, he was required by the Dey to carry presents to Constantinople, to conciliate the government of the sublime Porte, whom he had offended by concluding a treaty with France, when Turkey was engaged in a war with Buonaparte, in Egypt. Bainbridge remonstrated in vain against this unexpected requisition. The Dey reminded him that



he was entirely in his power, and threatened, in case of his refusing to comply with his orders, to confine in slavery the crew of the frigate, and to make war on the American trade. Bainbridge finally yielded to his arbitrary demands, being influenced to this decision by Richard O'Brien, the American consul, who had himself been imprisoned in Algiers, and was well aware of the power of the barbarian in his own territory.

The passengers, upwards of two hundred in number, and the presents, amounting to about half a million of our money, were placed on board, and the vessel ready to sail the 19th of October; when a difficulty arose in regard to the flag she was to carry. The Dey maintained that, as the frigate conveyed his ambassador, the Algerine flag should fly at the main and the American colours be carried at the fore; and Bainbridge, finding remonstrance vain, was again obliged to yield his opinion to superior force. No sooner had he passed the batteries, however, than he gave the precedence to his own national ensign, and the stars and stripes waved proudly from the pinnacle,—the place they so justly deserved. The voyage was a long and boisterous one. Contrary winds impeded their progress, and the crowded state of the vessel greatly interrupted the performance of its duties. The deck was crowded with cages of wild beasts for the Sultan, and the Mahometan passengers, who five times a day performed their devotions, with their faces towards Mecca, regulating their position by the compass on the binnacle, where they stationed one of their own number to give notice of any change incident to the tacking of the ship. Fearing a long



detention at the castles, Bainbridge had recourse to an artifice by which to dispense with the necessity of a *firman*. When about entering the harbour, he fired a salute, at the same time clewing sails as if he meant to anchor. The guns at the castles, on each side, returned the salute, and being enveloped in a cloud of smoke, the frigate crowded all sail, passed the castles, and dropped anchor under the walls of Constantinople, November 9th. A messenger was sent to inquire under what flag Bainbridge sailed : he replied, the flag of the United States, when the messenger remarked that no such country as the United States had ever been heard of at the Porte, and desired him to state more explicitly whence he came. He then reported his vessel to belong to the new world, which Columbus had discovered ; upon which the messenger returned on shore.\* He returned, after the lapse of a few hours, and presented a lamb and a bunch of flowers, emblems of peace and welcome. The governor of the castle had nearly lost his life for permitting the frigate to pass without a *firman* ; and it was only by the generous representations of Bainbridge,—who frankly acknowledged his error, and offered to bear the consequences himself,—that the Capudan Pacha was induced to withhold his signature from the governor's death warrant.

This Capudan Pacha, whose office corresponds with that of Lord High Admiral, formed a warm friendship for Bainbridge ; and being generous and well informed, and possessing greater influence at court than any other subject, this attachment proved of great service to the commander of the *George*

\* Harris.



Washington, during his stay at Constantinople. On his departure, the Pacha furnished him with a passport, which subsequently procured for himself, and the flag under which he sailed, great respect at the hands of the Turks. While at Constantinople, Captain Bainbridge met with Daniel Clarke, the celebrated traveller, and with him made several excursions into the neighbouring country, penetrating as far as the Black sea, where were displayed for the first time the stars and stripes of republican America.

The *George Washington* sailed for Algiers, on the 30th of December, 1800, and anchored without the harbour, on the 21st of January following. The commander resolved not again to place himself in the power of the Dey, and refused to anchor within the mole until he should promise to require no further service of himself or his vessel. The necessity of this precaution had been rendered apparent by a request which the Dey had sent to Bainbridge to return to Constantinople with his ambassador. The pledge was at length given, though with reluctance; and soon after bringing the frigate to her new moorings, Bainbridge and the American consul were invited to wait upon the Dey, in his audience chamber. They were received with harsh words and a frowning brow, and the rage of the despot soon burst forth with a fury that threatened personal violence. Surrounded with obedient janizaries, a nod from the monarch would have cost the Americans their lives; and had not Bainbridge haply bethought himself of the Capudan Pacha's letter of protection, the remaining moments of their lives would doubtless have been few. The paper was produced, and it acted as



a charm, changing the furious despot, in a moment, to a mild and even servile dependant. Every profession of friendship, and every offer of service were made, and the subject of a second voyage to Constantinople was never again alluded to.

The next day, the Dey caused the flag-staff of the French consul to be cut down, which amounted to a declaration of war against his government; and having no other object upon which to vent his fury, he caused the consul, with all the French residents at Algiers, to be cast into prison. Bainbridge humanely interfered in their behalf, and procured their release on condition that they should leave his territory within forty-eight hours. No other vessel but the *George Washington* could be procured to carry them from the Dey's power, and, notwithstanding the war then existing between France and our government, Bainbridge undertook to convey them to a place of safety; and by extraordinary exertions the vessel was got ready and sailed from the harbour within an hour of the expiration of the time allowed the French to escape. He landed his passengers at Alicant, and then sailed for the United States, where he found that his conduct was highly approved by the government.

In May, 1801, Captain Bainbridge,—who had been retained in the service on the reduction of the number of officers,—was appointed to the *Essex*, a man of war carrying fifty-eight twelve pounders, with orders to join a squadron about sailing for the Mediterranean. Besides the *Essex*, there were two other frigates, the *President* and the *Philadelphia*, and the schooner *Enterprise*. The squadron was under the



command of Commodore Richard Dale, and its object in sailing was to protect the American commerce from the attacks of the Tripolitan cruisers. It reached Gibraltar on the 1st of July, when it fell in with two Tripolitan corsairs, commanded by a Scotch renegade, in the capacity of admiral. The frigate Philadelphia was directed to watch these vessels, while the Essex was despatched to the northern coast to collect American merchantmen, and conduct them through the straits of Gibraltar. While engaged in this duty, Captain Bainbridge and his officers received frequent insults from some of the Spanish officers at Barcelona, which appear to have been induced by jealousy of the praises bestowed upon the Essex for her beauty and order. The commander displayed on this occasion his usual spirit and perseverance, and succeeded in obtaining from the offending officers a satisfactory apology. The Essex convoyed merchantmen through the straits during the winter and spring of 1802, when, being in want of repairs, she was ordered home. Bainbridge was soon after appointed to the command of the Philadelphia, to cruise in the Mediterranean, under Commodore Preble. Each vessel sailed as it was ready, and the Philadelphia, with a crew of over three hundred men, entered the straits on the 24th of August. On the night of the 26th, Bainbridge fell in with a ship and a brig in company, both under short canvass. Anxious to know their character, he hailed the ship, and, after much evasion on the part of the captain, ascertained her to be a Moorish cruiser, the Meshtoha, with a crew of one hundred and twenty men; and was informed that the brig was



an American, which they had boarded but not detained. This excited the suspicions of Bainbridge, and he sent his first lieutenant to board the *Meshtoha*. This attempt was resisted till an armed boat was sent, when no farther opposition being made, the frigate was searched. The officers and crew of the brig were found under the hold, having been captured by the Moorish cruiser, nine days before. The ship was taken, and the next day the brig was also captured, and with this prize, Bainbridge put into Gibraltar. He found by the papers of the Moorish commander, that he had permission from the governor of Mogadore to cruise for American vessels, although Morocco was ostensibly at peace with the United States. But this capture was a strong check to Moorish depredations, and prevented any repetition of the offence by that power.

A short time after, while cruising off Tripoli, Bainbridge was informed that a corsair belonging to this government had sailed on a cruise the day previous. Lieutenant commandant Smith, of the *Vixen*, was despatched in pursuit. On the 21st of October, as the *Philadelphia* was making sail to recover her position before Tripoli, from which she had been driven by westerly winds, at eight o'clock in the morning they perceived a vessel ahead, which proved to be one of the Bashaw's cruisers. All sail was made in pursuit, but, owing to Bainbridge's ignorance of the soundings, and the imperfection of his charts, his vessel struck on a reef, and every attempt to force the ship over the obstacle, or back her by the stern, proved unavailing. The anchors were cut away, the guns—except those aft—and other heavy articles



were cast overboard, the foremast cut away, but the frigate could not be moved from her unlucky position. Having been for five hours exposed to the fire of numerous gunboats, and a council of officers having decided that every means to get the ship off had been used, and that there was no hope of saving her, the flag was struck at four o'clock in the afternoon. Possession was taken about sunset, and the vessel entered at every port. Officers and crew were plundered, indiscriminately, of every thing valuable they possessed, and almost every rag of clothing. Bainbridge submitted to their pillage, till some barbarian attempted to force from him a miniature of his wife, which he successfully resisted. About ten o'clock they were landed, and conducted to the Bashaw's audience chamber, where, after a brief interview, he ordered them to another apartment, where a supper was provided for them. They were then placed in charge of the minister of state, Sidi Mohammed Dgheis, and conducted to the house of the late American consul, which was for a time to be their prison.\*

Their confinement was long and irksome, and terminated only with the war. The Danish consul, Mr. Nissen, proved a warm friend to the American captives; procured books to relieve the tediousness of their confinement; and devised means for a correspondence between Bainbridge and Commodore Preble. The Bashaw employed all his captured

\* Bainbridge was greatly gratified by the receipt, on the following day, of a letter from all his officers, in which they assured him of their warmest sympathies, and their conviction that the charts and soundings warranted his near approach to the shore,—which was the material point.



seamen in business connected with their trades, or at work on the fortifications. He allowed them wages for extra work, and, as they were permitted to walk through the streets, two or three at a time, they generally managed to spend the money thus obtained in purchasing *grog*, and then returned reeling to their prison. They were thus exposed to frequent collisions with the Tripolitans, and often were punished by the bastinado, which the under slave-driver,—whose humanity greatly favoured them,—administered with little severity. During the *fast of Ramadan*, the prisoners were treated with unusual kindness by the Mahometans, who are required, during this period of thirty days, to show hospitality and mercy to enemies. On the occasion of the *Bairam festival*, which immediately followed, Captain Bainbridge and his first lieutenant, Mr. David Porter, were invited to the Bashaw's palace, where this dignitary received them in great state. Having partaken of sherbet and coffee, they visited the prime minister, who received them in like manner; and then the minister of state, Sidi Mohammed Dgheis. The kind interposition of this amiable minister procured for the officers permission to ride out into the country to breathe the pure air, inhale the delightful odour of the orange groves, and forget, in the beauties of nature, the hard lot to which they were condemned.

On the 15th of February, 1804, the Philadelphia was destroyed; and the brave Americans who had devised and achieved this brilliant enterprise, waited but sufficient force to procure their countrymen's release. About the 1st of August, a large fleet was visible in the offing, but, in consequence of a heavy



gale, it soon disappeared. A few days after, the force reappeared, and then ensued the memorable attack of the 3d of August. On the night of the 14th of September, occurred the terrible catastrophe in which the gallant Somers perished; and from this time the din of war ceased.

The moment of their relief at length arrived. The consul general for Barbary appeared off the coast, as American negotiator; and the Spanish consul, as agent for the Bashaw, was ordered to confer with him on board the Constitution. Some little difficulties occurred to the adjustment of the terms, and the minister of state proposed that Bainbridge should go on board the frigate, and that by his endeavours the peace might be hastened. The wily Bashaw scoffed at the proposal, believing no reliance could be placed on the word of a "Christian dog;" and it was not till the generous minister had offered his own son as a pledge for Bainbridge's return, that the chief yielded his consent to the proposals. On the 1st of June, 1805, Bainbridge repaired on board the Constitution, and passed the whole day among the squadron; but he returned in the evening with little hope of the success of the negotiation. The Bashaw rejected with disdain the terms proposed by him, and Mr. Nissen was sent on board the frigate to confer with the American agent. These agreed upon the basis of a treaty, and on the next day a council was assembled by the Bashaw, to which was referred the articles for ratification or rejection. Bainbridge was invited to be present, and on his entering the council-hall, the Bashaw informed him that he conferred on him an honour never before received by a prisoner



in Barbary, in thus admitting him to his private divan; and, in order to enable him to understand the debates, he caused them to be carried on in French.

The Bashaw then proposed to the divan the question of "peace or war with the United States. The members were equally divided on the question, and the Bashaw remarked: "Four of you for peace, and four for war; which party am I to satisfy?—how am I to act?" Sidi Mohammed rose and addressed him, "You are our prince and master—you have not called us here to dictate to you, but to hear our opinions. It remains now for you to act as you please; but let me entreat you, for your own interest, and the happiness of your people, to make peace." The prince drew his signet from his bosom, affixed it to the treaty, and pronounced, "*It is peace.*" The treaty was conveyed back to the frigate; the salutes of peace followed; and thus the war terminated.

The exchange of prisoners was made, and shortly after the squadron sailed with the rescued captives, who, after nineteen months passed in painful captivity, rejoiced to find themselves free, on the decks of 'United States' men of war. A Court of Inquiry for the loss of the Philadelphia, was held at Syracuse, in the latter part of June, by which the officers were most honourably acquitted. His country judged fairly of Bainbridge in this affair; not a word of reproach has been uttered against him, while his sufferings have procured him the warmest sympathy. The officers of the Philadelphia reached home in the fall of 1805, and Bainbridge hastened to see a loved family from whom he had been so long severed. In a few months he was appointed to the command of



the Navy Yard at New York; but, as his pecuniary affairs were somewhat embarrassed, he procured a furlough, and for nearly two years engaged in the merchant service.

An accident happened to him while engaged in this service, which had nearly deprived his country of his subsequent valuable services, and brought him, in the flower of his age, to a watery grave. As he was returning from a visit to Captain Hays, in his own vessel, while near the Bahama bank, in the act of stepping from the boat to the *Minerva*, a wave struck the boat, and he was thrown between it and the ship. Unable to swim, he immediately sunk, but soon appeared at the stern of the vessel. The mate seized the main-brace, and in attempting to jump off with it that he might place it in the hands of the commander, his feet became entangled in it, and he did not reach the water. Bainbridge sunk a second time, and though various articles were thrown out for him to seize, he failed in reaching any of them, and sunk a third time. While slowly sinking, he perceived the deep-sea line near him, and, by strong exertions, succeeded in drawing himself to the surface with its aid, when he was taken up by the boat much exhausted. The deep-sea line had been cast out by his mulatto servant, Will, on hearing that his master was overboard, and this was the means of saving his life.

In March, 1808, he was appointed to the Portland station, and in December following, he received the command of the *President*, forty-four. A war with England was confidently expected, and the *President* cruised along our coast, in readiness for war, from



July, 1809, till the following spring, when, as there appeared a likelihood of an amicable adjustment of difficulties with England, Bainbridge engaged again in the merchant service, and sailed for St. Petersburg.

On his way, he was taken by a Danish cruiser, and conveyed into Copenhagen. His friend, Mr. Nissen, was with him in a short time, and his exertions soon procured the release of Bainbridge's vessel. It is mentioned, as a remarkable coincidence, that at the moment the ex-consul was apprised of Bainbridge's arrival, he was actually employed in unpacking a silver urn, which he had just received from the officers of the *Philadelphia*, as a testimony of their gratitude for his former kindness.

Bainbridge, shortly after, sailed up the Baltic, and continued in this trade till the action between the British vessel *Little Belt*, and his late ship, the *President*; on the news of which he crossed to the Atlantic coast over land,—a distance of eleven hundred miles. During this journey, he was driven, through the carelessness of the coachman, over a precipice of thirty feet, and though severely bruised, his persevering spirit enabled him to reach Gotheburg, (December 20th.) On the 31st, he sailed for England, and twice in the course of the voyage, his energy and presence of mind, in moments of danger, saved the English vessel in which he sailed, and the lives of his fellow passengers from impending destruction. He delivered despatches to the American minister in London, set sail for Boston, and arrived there early in February, whence he hastened to Washington, and reported himself as ready for active service.











But the cabinet decided against placing our few vessels of war in contest with the powerful navy of Britain; and it was not until Captain Bainbridge and Commodore Stewart had represented in forcible language the evil effects that would result from such a course of proceeding, that their former decision was countermanded, and our men of war permitted to cruise. Having effected this grand object, Bainbridge returned to Boston, and took charge of the navy yard at Charlestown.

The United States declared war against Great Britain on the 18th of June, 1812, and it is not to be supposed that one so adventurous as Bainbridge could be satisfied to remain on shore, comparatively inactive, when danger and glory were to be courted on the sea. He applied for the command of a frigate, and was appointed to the *Constellation*, thirty-eight, with orders to prepare her for sea with all despatch. His arrangements were not yet completed, when Captain Hull arrived in Boston with the *Constitution*, after achieving his splendid victory over the *Guerriere*. As Hull was obliged to resign his command, on account of some private affairs which required his immediate attention, Bainbridge requested to be transferred to his frigate. This request was complied with, and the *Essex* and *Hornet* being also placed under his orders at the same time, he hoisted his broad pennant on board the *Constitution*, September 15th, 1812.

The *Essex*, then in the Delaware, was ordered to rendezvous at the Cape de Verde isles; but she was prevented by the events of the cruise from joining the rest of the squadron. The *Constitution* and *Hornet*



sailed on the 26th October, and arrived off St. Salvador on the 13th December. On the 29th, in latitude  $13^{\circ}$ , 6' south, and about ten leagues from the coast of Brazil, the Constitution fell in with an enemy's frigate, the Java, bound for the East Indies, with a number of supernumerary officers and seamen for the Bombay station. The Commodore, finding the frigate fairly within his reach, prepared with alacrity for action. The stranger showed English colours, and bore down with the intention of raking the Constitution. Bainbridge avoided this, and the enemy having hauled down colours, and left flying a jack only, the Commodore gave orders to fire ahead of the enemy to make him show full colours. This was returned with a full broadside, and a general action commenced, both ships striving to rake and to avoid being raked.

Soon after the commencement of the action, Bainbridge received a ball in the hip; and a few minutes later a shot carried away the wheel, and drove a small bolt with violence into his thigh. These injuries did not induce him to sit down, and he continued on deck, giving orders, until eleven o'clock at night. The action lasted an hour and fifty-five minutes, when the enemy struck her flag, and the American Commodore sent Lieutenant Parker to take possession. The Java was commanded by Captain Lambert, a distinguished officer, who was mortally wounded, and died a few days after the battle. The enemy's loss was not less than sixty killed and one hundred wounded. The Constitution lost nine killed, and twenty-five wounded. The two vessels presented a striking contrast in appearance, at the close of the action: the



Constitution and Java.









Constitution "actually coming out of the battle as she had gone into it, with royal-yards across, and every spar, from the highest to the lowest, in its place," though some of them were considerably injured; while the Java lay upon the water an unmanageable wreck, with every spar shot away, and but a few stumps left standing. Bainbridge displayed great kindness in the treatment of his prisoners, and having destroyed his prize, he landed his captives at St. Salvador, on parole of honour not to engage in hostilities against the United States, until exchanged.

The Constitution soon returned home for repairs, and Bainbridge entered Boston harbour in triumph, as cordially greeted for his present successes, as he had formerly been sympathized with for his misfortunes. He resumed the command of the Charlestown yard; and remained in this office till the fitting out of a squadron for the Mediterranean, in the spring of 1815. This squadron was taken out by Decatur, to act against the Dey of Algiers; and Bainbridge, who followed as chief commandant, did not arrive until the war had been brought to a successful close: but in the course of the cruise, the latter settled several difficulties with the states of Barbary. He had under his command eighteen or twenty cruisers, being a larger naval force than had ever before sailed under our flag.

Bainbridge continued to reside at Boston until 1819, when he performed the last piece of duty afloat, in another cruise in the Mediterranean, being his fifth. He sailed in the Columbus, eighty, in April, 1820, the principal object of the cruise being to impress the nations on the coast with an idea of the



strength of our navy, and the necessity of respecting the rights of the republic. Having effected this object, visited the Barbary powers, and spent some time at Naples, he was relieved by Commodore Jones, and returned home.

The remaining years of his life were spent in active service on land. He commanded at Charlestown and at Philadelphia; he served for three years at the head of the Board of Navy Commissioners, at Washington; and having, finally, been obliged to give up his command at Boston, owing to the decline of his health, and the severity of the climate, he returned to Philadelphia, in March, 1832, with a constitution broken down by disease. He lingered on till the 28th of July, when he calmly yielded up his spirit to its Giver, at the age of fifty-seven years, two months and twenty-one days. His intellect remained unimpaired, till an hour or two before his death, when it occasionally wandered. He called for his pistols about this time, and as this demand was not complied with, he raised his once noble frame in his bed, and vehemently demanding these instruments, ordered all hands to be called to board the enemy!

A biographer thus portrays his personal appearance and character :

“Commodore Bainbridge was a man of fine and commanding personal appearance. His stature was about six feet, and his frame was muscular and of unusually good proportions. His face was handsome, particularly in youth, and his eye uncommonly animated and piercing. In temperament he was ardent and sanguine; but cool in danger, and of a courage of proof. His feelings were vehement, and he was

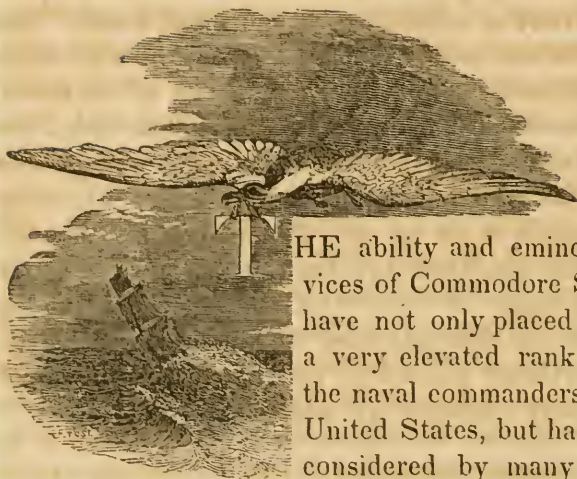


quickly roused; but generous and brave, he was easily appeased. Like most men who are excitable, but who are firm at bottom, he was calmest in the moments of greatest responsibility. He was hospitable, chivalrous, magnanimous, and a fast friend. His discipline was severe, but he tempered it with much consideration for the wants and health of his crews. Few served with him who did not love him,—for the conviction that his heart was right was general among all who knew him. There was a cordiality and warmth in his manner, that gained him friends, and those who knew him best, say he had the art of keeping them. \* \* \* \* \* To his dying hour, Bainbridge continued the warm-hearted friend, the chivalrous gentleman, and the devoted lover of his country's honour and interests."





## CHARLES STEWART.



HE ability and eminent services of Commodore Stewart have not only placed him in a very elevated rank among the naval commanders of the United States, but have been considered by many of his fellow citizens, as giving him a claim to the highest mark of their confidence which their suffrages can confer. Whatever difference of opinion may exist as to the fitness of the commodore for civil stations, it is certain that his abilities have always been found equal to the occasion which called them forth, either upon the land, or upon his favourite field, the ocean.

Charles Stewart was born in the city of Philadelphia, on the twenty-eighth day of July, 1778, the month after the British army evacuated the city. His parents were natives of Ireland. It was his misfortune to lose his father before he had attained his second year. He was the youngest of eight children. On the death of his father, his mother was left, in the midst of the revolution, with four children to



provide for, and with limited means for their support and education. Being, however, a woman of talents and great energy, she was not found wanting in this arduous task.

At the age of thirteen, Charles sought and found employment in the merchant service, in which he rose, through the several grades, from the situation of cabin boy, to the command of an Indiaman; and here, in the full tide of successful mercantile enterprise, he relinquished all that he had toiled for, and offered himself to the service of his country. On the ninth of March, 1798, he was commissioned lieutenant in the navy of the United States, and received orders to join the frigate *United States*, then in command of Commodore John Barry. He continued in this ship until July, 1800. Part of this time the frigate was employed in the West Indies, to look after and restrain the French privateers, and to protect our commerce against their depredations, in which service she was eminently successful. In the latter part of the year the frigate was engaged in transporting the commissioners for treating with France to that country, and was thus deprived of the opportunity which, under other circumstances, might have led to other and higher honours.

On the sixteenth of July, 1800, Lieutenant Stewart was appointed to the command of the United States' schooner *Experiment*, of twelve guns, in which he sailed on a cruise to the West Indies. Having arrived on the station assigned him, on the night of September the 1st, he fell in with the French armed schooner *Deux Amis*, of eight guns, and brought her to action, which terminated in ten minutes; the



Deux Amis having struck her colours, she was sent to the United States for condemnation. Cruising under the lee of Barbuda, at daylight on the thirtieth of September, two sails were discovered, bearing down on the Experiment, with all sail set, and English colours hoisted. The Experiment continued lying to, with the British signal of the day flying, until they approached within gun-shot, when, finding one to be a brig of war of eighteen guns, and the other a three-masted schooner of fourteen guns, and that they would not answer the signal, Lieutenant Stewart determined to retreat from such superior force, and avail himself of any opportunity that might offer for cutting off one of those vessels. It was soon discovered that the Experiment could outsail them, and after a fruitless chase of two hours, on the wind, they gave up the pursuit, hoisted French colours, fired a gun of defiance to windward, and kept their vessels off before the wind. He, being now satisfied of their character and force, manœuvred to gain their wake to windward, and thus became the pursuing vessel in his turn. Sail was crowded on the Experiment, and at about eight o'clock at night she came up with the three-masted schooner, and taking a position on her larboard quarter, poured in a broadside; in a few minutes the enemy struck her colours, and surrendered to the Experiment. She proved to be the French national schooner Diana, commanded by Captain Perandeau; having on board Lieutenant de Vaisseau, with a detachment of thirty invalid soldiers, and a crew of sixty-five men, also General Rigaud, on his way to France, under the convoy of the brig of war, which made her escape, and got into



Saint Bartholomew. The prize was despatched to the United States, under command of Lieutenant James R. Caldwell, and was restored to the French under an article of the treaty; but the captors were never compensated by the government for this vessel, as others were in many cases.

After disposing of the prisoners at St. Christopher, Lieutenant Stewart continued on his cruising ground, and recaptured a number of American vessels which had been taken by the French, and thus rescued a considerable amount of property from the grasp of their privateers. On the sixteenth of November, at midnight, he fell in with an armed vessel, and after repeatedly hailing and requesting her to heave to, that a boat might board her, for the purpose of ascertaining her character, and receiving no answer or other satisfaction, he determined to bring her to action. The vessel kept up a running fight with great spirit and determination, for forty minutes, when she became so cut up and crippled by the *Experiment*'s fire, that she was obliged to strike and submit to be boarded. She proved to be the *Louisa Bridger*, of Bermuda, carrying eight nine-pounders, with a stout crew of Bermudians. She was so much injured that the officers and crew of the *Experiment* were occupied until three o'clock next day in repairing her damages. Having two shot through her bottom, she was almost in a sinking condition, and when Lieutenant Porter boarded her, was found to have four feet water in the hold. After putting her in the best repair which circumstances permitted, Lieutenant Stewart dismissed her on her cruise. The *Experiment* had only one killed and two wounded



slightly. The wind, during the action, was strong and squally, and the *Experiment* careened so much, that Lieutenant Stewart, to enable his guns to be sufficiently depressed, found it necessary to cut three inch planks into short lengths, and put them under the trucks of the gun carriages, to raise the guns sufficiently from the lower port sills.

On the return of the *Experiment* to St. Christopher, Commodore Truxtun ordered Lieutenant Stewart to proceed with a convoy from Martinique to the island of St. Thomas, and thence to Curacoa, to look for the United States' brig *Pickering*, and frigate *Insurgent*, but nothing could be heard of those vessels at that place; they had both foundered in the equinoxial gale, with a store ship under their care, and all hands perished. On leaving Curacoa the *Experiment* was ordered to proceed to Norfolk.

Standing in for the Mona passage, early in the morning, a vessel was discovered in distress, and beating on the reef off Saona Island. On nearing her, many persons were discovered to be on board. After anchoring the *Experiment* at a safe distance from the reef, Lieutenant Stewart despatched Lieutenant Porter with the boats to their relief, who, with much difficulty and danger from the breakers on the reef, succeeded in rescuing from destruction about sixty women and children, with seven men of the vessel's crew. They were the families of the most respectable inhabitants of St. Domingo, flying from the siege of that city by the blacks. They had been on the rocks for two days, without any thing to eat or drink; and at the time of their rescue only a small portion of the quarter deck was above water.



After the sailors had recovered as much of the property as they could, by diving into the vessel's hold, the Experiment proceeded to the city of St. Domingo with the rescued persons, where they were all landed the next day, and restored to their friends. Their gratitude was unbounded, and the Experiment was most liberally furnished, gratis, with every refreshment the place afforded. The President of St. Domingo, Don Joaquin Garcia, wrote a letter of thanks to the President of the United States, (Mr. Jefferson,) commending in the highest terms the conduct of Lieutenant Stewart and his gallant crew on this occasion.

On the arrival of the Experiment, in 1801, at Norfolk, she was sold out of the service, under the act of congress fixing the naval establishment. Lieutenant Stewart was amongst the thirty-six lieutenants retained under that law, and was placed in charge of the frigate Chesapeake, in ordinary, at Norfolk.

In 1802, he joined the United States' frigate Constellation, as first officer of Captain Murray, who was ordered to the Mediterranean to blockade Tripoli, then at war with the United States. This was a short cruise of one year, and afforded no opportunity for distinction. On her return, Lieutenant Stewart was placed in command of the brig Siren, then being built at Philadelphia, and received orders to superintend her equipment, which was effected in seven days after she was launched; when she sailed for the Mediterranean to join the command of Commodore Preble. She was engaged in giving protection to our commerce by convoy, and conveying the consular presents to the Dey of Algiers.



Syracuse, in the island of Sicily, was the rendezvous of the squadron. From that place the *Siren* was engaged in the expedition sent under Lieutenant Stewart to destroy the frigate *Philadelphia*, which had grounded off the harbour of Tripoli, and was surrendered to the Bashaw. Lieutenant Decatur was sent in the *Intrepid*, ketch, with seventy volunteers, to board and burn the frigate, which he accomplished in the most gallant manner; and with the aid of the *Siren's* boats, under Lieutenant Caldwell, effected his retreat out of the harbour. After this successful expedition, the *Siren*, Lieutenant Stewart, with the *Vixen*, *Enterprise*, and *Nautilus*, all under his command, were employed in a rigid blockade of the city of Tripoli and adjacent harbours. During this blockade Lieutenant Stewart frequently led in the vessels of the blockade to the attack of the batteries and flotilla, to accustom the officers and men to the enemy's fire, and to force the Tripolitans to expend their ammunition; and on one occasion, they attacked and destroyed two batteries which the enemy had erected to the westward of the city, for the protection of their coasting trade.

On the 21st of July, 1804, Commodore Preble arrived off Tripoli with the frigate *Constitution*, 44, brig *Argus*, 18, brig *Siren*, 18, *Scourge*, schooner *Vixen*, 16, *Enterprise*, 14, two mortar vessels, and six gunboats; with these, in conjunction with the force above mentioned, he determined to attack the town, flotilla, and batteries of Tripoli. On the 3d of August, the wind proving favourable, at meridian the signal was made to prepare for battle, when the whole force, forming a line a-head, led on by the



Siren, Lieutenant Stewart, advanced to the attack, and when within reach of the enemy's fire, the gunboats were cast off, and immediately boarded the gunboats of Tripoli, twenty of which were moored in a line, outside of the reef which formed the harbour. Three of them were carried, and brought off under cover of the vessels of war, and added to the American squadron. Lieutenant Stewart for his gallant conduct on this occasion received the thanks of Commodore Preble.

For his distinguished services throughout the blockade he was promoted to be master commandant, and placed in command of the frigate *Essex*, which vessel, after the conclusion of peace with Tripoli, proceeded with the rest of the squadron, commanded by Commodore Rodgers, to Tunis Bay, for the purpose of checking in that regency a rising disposition to commence hostilities on the flag and commerce of the United States. The hostile attitude of the squadron, while there, induced Mr. George Davis, consul of the United States, to leave the city, and seek refuge on board the fleet. The state of our affairs now drawing to a crisis so serious, it appeared to the consul general, Colonel Lear, that the flag officer ought to strengthen his acts with the advice and consent of his principal officers; in consequence of which, the commander-in-chief called a council, consisting of Captains Campbell, Decatur, Stewart, Hull, Smith, Dent, and Robinson, to whom the situation of our affairs with the regency was explained, and the opinion of the officers demanded whether hostilities ought not immediately to commence. It was at this council that the opinion of Captain



Stewart carried with it the assent of all the officers, and preserved the peace of the country with that regency. It was on receiving that opinion, as delivered in the council, transmitted by the consul general and the consul, Mr. Davis, to the President of the United States, that Mr. Jefferson expressed to his cabinet the high satisfaction he felt at having an officer in the squadron who so thoroughly comprehended international law, the constitution of his country, and the policy of his government. On the termination of this affair with the regency of Tunis, Captain Stewart took command of the frigate *Constellation*, and returned to the United States.

During part of the years 1806 and '7, Captain Stewart was employed in superintending the construction of gunboats at New York, and was afterwards engaged in prosecuting mercantile enterprises to the East Indies, the Mediterranean, and the Adriatic. On the declaration of war with Great Britain, in 1812, he proceeded, in conjunction with Commodore Bainbridge, to Washington, for the purpose of seeking service; but on presenting themselves at the Navy Department, they were informed that it had been decided by the cabinet to place all the ships of war in the harbour of New York for its defence, and thus deprive the marine of all opportunity for distinguished service. But, on the 22d of June, 1812, it was determined by the President, in conformity with the suggestions of these officers, that the ships should be sent to sea, and to sea they were forthwith ordered. Captain Stewart was appointed to the command of the brig *Argus* and the *Hornet* sloop of war.



In December he was appointed to the command of the frigate *Constellation*, then repairing at Washington. Shortly after, she was equipped, and ready for sea, upon which occasion Captain Stewart gave a splendid entertainment on board that vessel, to all branches of government, and the citizens of the district. He now proceeded to Hampton Roads, preparatory to going on a cruise; but unfortunately, the morning after anchoring there, he discovered the enemy approaching his anchorage with a superior force of two seventy-fours, three frigates, and several small vessels of war; he lost no time in preparing to retreat. It being calm with him, he commenced kedging his frigate towards Norfolk; the enemy's vessels approached rapidly with a fine breeze, which they fortunately lost off Willoughby's point, and they were in consequence of the ebb tide compelled to anchor. The *Constellation* was kedged up on the flats off Sowell's Point, where she lay aground the rest of the day; Captain Stewart continued to press the river craft and lighten his vessel. In case the enemy, by kedging up their seventy-fours, or by means of a breeze, had reached his position, he was prepared for burning the *Constellation*; the night flood, however, made, when about eight o'clock his ship floated, sail was made on her with a fine breeze, boats with lights and pilots were sent to point out the shoals, and at eleven o'clock, P. M., the *Constellation* was safely moored between forts Norfolk and Nelson, where she afterwards contributed to defend that place, and with her cannon and her crew repulsed the enemy's attack on Craney Island, and



defeated the expedition sent to capture Norfolk and its dependencies.

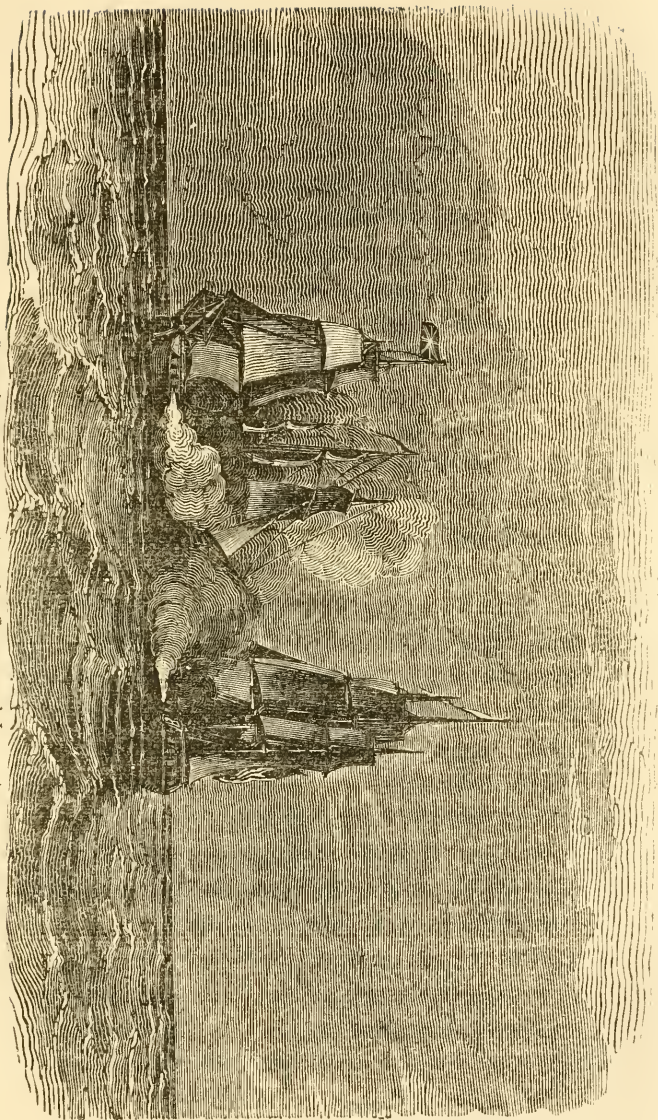
In the summer of 1813, Captain Stewart was ordered to assume the command of the frigate *Constitution*, then undergoing repairs at Boston. In December following he proceeded on a cruise. After exhibiting that ship on the coasts of Georgia and South Carolina, and about the Bermuda Islands, &c. and destroying the *Picton* of sixteen guns, a merchant ship of ten guns, the brig *Catherine*, and schooner *Phoenix*, he chased several British ships of war, and the frigate *La Pique*, in the Mona passage, without being able to overtake any of them, in consequence of the worn out state of the sails of the *Constitution*. Captain Stewart determined to return to Boston, and replace them; in April the *Constitution* arrived at Marblehead, in Massachusetts, having with great difficulty escaped from the British frigates, the *Junon*, and *La Nymphe*, of fifty guns each.

In December, the *Constitution* proceeded on another cruise, having been refitted with great care, and furnished with new sails. On the 24th, he captured and destroyed, to the eastward of the Bermudas, the brig *Lord Nelson*; off Lisbon he captured the ship *Susan*, with a valuable cargo, and sent her to New York; and on the 20th of February, 1815, after a sharp conflict of forty minutes, he captured the British ships of war, the *Cyane* of thirty-four guns, and the *Levant* of twenty-one guns, having three men killed, and thirteen wounded, the British ships having in all thirty-five killed, and forty-two wounded.

Captain Stewart proceeded with these prizes to the Island of St. Jago, with a view to divest his ship



Constitution capturing the Cyane and Levant.









of the numerous prisoners, consisting of the officers, seamen, and marines of both ships of the enemy, amounting to nearly four hundred. While making arrangements for despatching them at Port Praya, for Barbadoes, the British squadron, consisting of the ships of war the *Acasta* of fifty guns, the *New Castle* of sixty-four guns, and the *Leander* of sixty-four guns, under the command of Sir George Collier, reached his position under cover of a thick fog. Notwithstanding their near approach, Captain Stewart determined to retreat, and immediately the *Constitution* and her prizes cut their cables and crowded sail to escape. He was fortunate in being able, by his skilful management and manœuvres, to save from their grasp his favourite frigate *Constitution*, and the *Cyane*; the *Levant* was captured by the squadron and sent to Barbadoes.

After this escape, he proceeded with the *Constitution* to Maranhão, in the Brazils, and landed the prisoners, refreshed his crew, refitted his vessel, and returned to Boston, where he and his officers were received with the usual courtesies by their fellow citizens.

On his way through New York, the common council honoured Captain Stewart with the *freedom of their city*, in a gold box, and extended towards him and his officers the courteous hospitalities of that city, by a public dinner. On his arrival in Philadelphia, the legislature of his native State (Pennsylvania) voted him their thanks, and directed his excellency the governor to cause a gold-hilted sword to be presented to Captain Stewart, in testimony of their sense of his distinguished merits in



capturing the British ships of war of superior force, the *Cyane*, and the *Levant*. On the meeting of congress, the assembled representatives of the nation passed a vote of thanks to Captain Stewart, his officers, and crew; and resolved that a suitable gold medal, commemorative of that brilliant event, the capture of the two British ships of war, the *Cyane* and the *Levant*, by the *Constitution*, should be presented to Captain Stewart, in testimony of the sense they entertained of his gallantry, and that of his officers, seamen and marines, under his command on that occasion.

The war with Great Britain having terminated, the *Constitution* was put out of commission, and laid up in ordinary. In 1816, Captain Stewart was placed in command of the *Franklin* ship of the line, of seventy-four guns, and in 1817, she was fitted out at Philadelphia as the flag ship of Commodore Stewart, who was directed to take command of the American squadron in the Mediterranean sea. In November, 1817, he sailed for England, to convey the Hon. Richard Rush as a minister to the court of St. James, who was landed there in the latter part of December, after which the *Franklin* proceeded to the Mediterranean, and Commodore Stewart took command of the forces of the United States in that sea. In this station he preserved the glory of his former exploits, and the honour of his country. He was placed in a situation which calls forth an energy and address that few men are fortunate enough to combine.

In 1820, the *Franklin* returned to the United States, and remained in ordinary until the following



year, when she was again fitted for service in the Pacific, and Commodore Stewart was placed in command. This post, owing to the state of affairs in the South American provinces, called for the exercise of great discretion and prudence in giving protection to his fellow citizens, their commerce and their property, while, at the same time, he had to guard against the representations of malignant enemies. In these trying circumstances the commodore adopted that line of conduct which patriotism, duty and honour alone could point out.

On returning to the country he had so nobly served, Commodore Stewart was subject to a degrading arrest for one year, and to the costs of an expensive court martial. An acquittal, more honourable than the records of any naval tribunal can furnish, was the result accorded him, under the oath of twelve of his brother officers, distinguished for their patriotism, valour, experience, and fidelity to their country. On his return from Washington, where his trial took place, to Philadelphia, his friends greeted him with a public dinner in approbation of his services in the Pacific. From 1825 to 1830, he was variously engaged in appropriate duties, such as examining midshipmen, and sitting on court martials.

In August, 1830, he was appointed a member of the Board of Navy Commissioners at Washington, where he remained until August, 1833, he then retired to his farm in New Jersey. In July, 1836, Commodores Stewart, Dallas and Bolton were appointed commissioners to prepare plans for the improvement of the navy yard at Pensacola.

On the 1st of July, 1837, Commodore James



Barron resigned the command of the navy yard at Philadelphia, and Commodore Stewart was placed in command of that station. By the most strenuous exertions, Commodore Stewart succeeded in launching the line-of-battle ship *Pennsylvania*, on the 18th of July. This ship, the largest and most magnificent in point of model and construction now afloat, was ordered by the Secretary of the Navy to be removed from Philadelphia to Norfolk, *to be coppered*, and Commodore Stewart was appointed to equip and take her to that place for the purpose. Since that period he has been engaged, as usual, in various services, requiring the ability and experience of a first rate commander.

Commodore Stewart is about five feet nine inches in height, erect and well proportioned, of a dignified and engaging presence, and possessed of great constitutional powers to endure hardships and privations of all kinds. Although sixty-five years of age, he is still as active as if he were but in the prime of life. His complexion is fair, but it bears the weather-beaten marks of naval service. His hair is of a chestnut colour; his eyes blue, large, penetrating, and intelligent. The cast of his countenance is Roman, bold, strong, and commanding, and his head finely formed. He possesses great vigor of mind, a high sense of justice, and inflexible resolution of purpose. His mind is acute and powerful, grasping the greatest or smallest subjects with the intuitive mastery of genius. He not only fully understands his profession as a naval commander, but all the various interests of commerce, the foreign and domestic policy of his country, the principles of government, and the "law



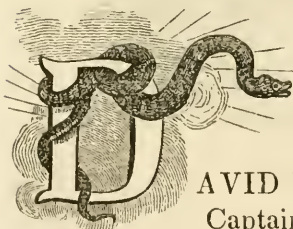
of nations," are as familiar to him as "household words." His control over his passions is truly surprising; and under the most irritating circumstances, his oldest seamen have never yet seen a ray of anger flash from his eye. His kindness, benevolence and humanity are proverbial amongst those who know him; but his sense of justice and of the requisitions of duty are as unbending as fate.







DAVID PORTER.



DAVID PORTER, the eldest son of Captain David Porter, was born in Boston, on the 1st February, 1780. His father was an officer in our navy during the revolutionary war, and distinguished himself on various occasions by his activity, enterprise and daring spirit. Being necessarily absent from home for the greater part of his time, the charge of his infant family devolved almost entirely on his wife. She was a pious and intelligent woman,



the friend and instructor of her children, teaching them, not merely by her precepts, but by her amiable and virtuous example. Soon after the conclusion of the war, Captain Porter removed with his household to Baltimore, where he took command of the revenue cutter the *Active*. Here, in the bosom of his family, he would indulge in the veteran's foible of recounting past scenes of peril and adventure, and talking over the wonders and vicissitudes that chequer a seafaring life. Little David would sit for hours and listen and kindle at these marvellous tales; while his father, perceiving his own love of enterprise springing up in the bosom of the lad, took every means to cherish it and to inspire him with a passion for the sea. He at the same time gave him all the education and instruction that his limited means afforded, and being afterwards in command of a vessel in the West India trade, proposed to take him a voyage by way of initiating him into the life of a sailor. The constitution of the latter being feeble and delicate excited all the apprehensions of a tender mother, who remonstrated, with maternal solicitude, against exposing the puny strippling to the dangers and hardships of so rude a life. Her objections, however, were either obviated or overruled, and at the age of sixteen he sailed with his father for the West Indies, in the schooner *Eliza*. While at the port of Jeremie, in the island of St. Domingo, a press-gang endeavoured to board the vessel in search of men; they were bravely repelled, with the loss of several killed and wounded on both sides; one man was shot down close by the side of young Porter. This affair excited considerable attention at the time. A narrative appeared in the public



papers, and much praise was awarded to Captain Porter for the gallant vindication of his flag.

In the course of his second voyage, which he performed as mate of a ship, from Baltimore to St. Domingo, young Porter had a further taste of the vicissitudes of a sailor's life. He was twice impressed by the British, and each time effected his escape, but was so reduced in purse as to be obliged to work his passage home in the winter season, destitute of necessary clothing. In this forlorn condition, he had to perform duty on a cold and stormy coast, where every spray was converted instantaneously into a sheet of ice. It would appear almost incredible that his feeble frame, little inured to hardship, could have sustained so much, were it not known how greatly the exertions of the body are supported by mental excitement. Scarcely had he recovered from his late fatigues when he applied for admission into the navy; and on receiving a midshipman's warrant, immediately joined the frigate *Constellation*, Commodore Truxton. In the action with the French frigate the *Insurgent*, Porter was stationed on the foretop, and distinguished himself by his good conduct. Want of friends alone prevented his promotion at the time. When Commodore Barron was appointed to the command of the *Constellation*, Porter was advanced to the rank of lieutenant solely on account of his merit, having no friends or connexions capable of urging his fortunes. He was ordered to join the United States' schooner *Experiment* under Captain Maley, to be employed on the West India station. During the cruise they had a long and obstinate engagement with a number of



brigand barges in the Bite of Leogan, which afforded him another opportunity of bringing himself into notice. He was also frequently employed in boat expeditions to cut out vessels, in which he displayed much coolness and address. Commodore Talbot, who commanded on that station, gave him charge of the *Amphitrite*, a small pilot boat prize schooner, mounting five small swivels taken from the tops of the *Constellation*, and manned with fifteen hands. Not long after taking this command he fell in with a French privateer, mounting a long twelve pounder and several swivels, having a crew of forty men, and accompanied with a prize ship and a large barge, with thirty men armed with swivels. Notwithstanding the great disparity of force, Porter ordered his vessel to be laid alongside the privateer. The contest was arduous, and for some time doubtful, for in the commencement of the action he lost his rudder, which rendered the schooner unmanageable. The event, however, excused the desperateness of the attack, for after an obstinate and bloody resistance, the privateer surrendered with the loss of seven killed and fifteen wounded. Not a man of Porter's crew was killed; several, however, were wounded, and his vessel was much injured. The prize was also taken, but the barge escaped. The conduct of Lieutenant Porter in this gallant little affair was highly applauded by his commander.

Shortly after his return to the United States he sailed as first lieutenant in the *Experiment*, commanded by Captain Charles Stewart. They were again stationed in the West Indies, and afforded great protection to the American commerce in that



quarter. They had several engagements with French privateers, and were always successful, insomuch that they became the terror of those marauders of the ocean, and effectually controlled their rapacity and kept them quiet in port. The gallant and lamented Trippe was second lieutenant of the *Experiment* at the time.

When the first squadron was ordered for the Mediterranean, Porter sailed as first lieutenant of the schooner *Enterprise*, Captain Stewart. In this cruise they encountered a Tripolitan corsair, of very superior force; a severe battle ensued, in which the enemy suffered great slaughter, and was compelled to surrender, while our ship received but little injury.

In this brilliant action Porter acquired much reputation from the conspicuous part he acted. He afterwards served on board of different ships in the Mediterranean station, and distinguished himself by his intrepidity and zeal whenever an opportunity presented. On one occasion he commanded an expedition of boats sent to destroy some vessels laden with wheat, at anchor in the harbour of old Tripoli; the service was promptly and effectually performed; in the engagement he received a musket ball through his left thigh.

Shortly after recovering from his wound he was transposed from the *New York* to the *Philadelphia*, Captain Bainbridge, as first lieutenant. The frigate was then lying at Gibraltar, when he joined her in September, 1803. She soon after sailed for the blockade of Tripoli. No event took place worthy of mention until the 31st of October. Nearly a week previous to this ill-fated day, the weather had



been tempestuous, which rendered it prudent to keep the ship off the land.

The 31st opened with all the splendour of a Sicilian morning: the promise of a more delightful day never appeared. The land was just observed, when a sail was descried making for the harbour, with a pleasant easterly breeze. It was soon ascertained to be an armed ship of the enemy, and all sail was set in chase. After an ineffectual pursuit of several leagues, Captain Bainbridge had just given orders to haul off, when the frigate grounded. Every expedient that skill or courage could devise to float or defend her, was successively resorted to, but in vain. The particulars of this unfortunate affair are too generally known to need a minute recital; it is sufficient to add that this noble ship and her gallant crew were surrendered to a barbarous and dastardly enemy, whose only motive in warfare is the hope of plunder. Throughout the long and dreary confinement which ensued, in the dungeons of Tripoli, Porter never suffered himself for a moment to sink into despondency; but supported the galling indignities and hardships of his situation with equanimity and even cheerfulness. A seasonable supply of books served to beguile the hours of imprisonment, and enabled him even to turn them to advantage. He closely applied himself to the study of ancient and modern history, biography, the French language, and drawing; in which art, so useful to a seaman, he made himself a considerable proficient. He also sedulously cultivated the theory of his profession, and improved the junior officers by his frequent instructions; representing the manœuvres of fleets in



battle by means of small boards ingeniously arranged. He was active in promoting any plan of labour or amusement that could ameliorate the situation or dispel the gloomy reflections of his companions. By these means captivity was robbed of its heaviest evils, that dull monotony that wearies the spirits, and that mental inactivity that engenders melancholy and hypochondria. An incident which occurred during his confinement deserves to be mentioned, as being highly creditable to Lieutenant Porter. Under the rooms occupied by the officers was a long dark passage, through which the American sailors, who were employed in public labour, frequently passed to different parts of the castle. Their conversation being repeatedly heard as they passed to and fro, some one made a small hole in the wall to communicate with them. For some days a constant intercourse was kept up, by sending down notes tied to a string. Some persons, however, indiscreetly entering into conversation with the seamen, were overheard, and information immediately carried to the Bashaw. In a few minutes the bolts of the prison door were heard to fly back with unwonted violence, and Sassi (chief officer of the castle) rushed furiously in. His features were distorted, and his voice almost inarticulate with passion. He demanded in a vehement tone by whom or whose authority the walls had been opened; when Porter advanced with a firm step and composed countenance, and replied, "I alone am responsible." He was abruptly and rudely hurried from the prison, and the gate was again closed. His generous self-devotion, while it commanded the admiration of his companions, heightened



their anxiety for his fate; apprehending some act of violence from the impetuous temper and absolute power of the Bashaw. Their fears, however, were appeased by the return of Porter, after considerable detention; having been dismissed without any further severity, through the intercession of the minister Mahomet Dghies, who had on previous occasions shown a friendly disposition towards the prisoners.

It is unnecessary here to dwell on the various incidents that occurred in this tedious captivity, and of the many ingenious and adventurous plans of escape, devised and attempted by our officers, in all which Porter took an active and prominent part. When peace was at length made, and they were restored to light and liberty, he embarked with his companions for Syracuse, where a court of inquiry was held on the loss of the Philadelphia. After an honourable acquittal he was appointed to the command of the United States' brig Enterprise, and soon after was ordered by Commodore Rodgers to proceed to Tripoli, with permission to cruise along the shore of Bengazi, and to visit the ruins of Septis Magna, aneiently a Roman colony. He was accompanied in this expedition by some of his friends, and after a short and pleasant passage, anchored near the latter place. They passed three days in wandering among the mouldering remains of Roman taste and grandeur; and exeavated in such places as seemed to promise a reward for their researches. A number of ancient coins and cameos were found, and, among other curiosities, were two statues in tolerable preservation; the one a warrior, the other a female figure, of beautiful white marble and excellent workmanship.



Verde antique pillars, of large size, formed of a single piece, and unbroken, were scattered along the shores. Near the harbour stood a lofty and elegant building, of which Lieutenant Porter took a drawing. The awning under which the party dined was spread on the site, and among the fallen columns of a temple of Jupiter; and a zest was given to the repast, by the classical ideas awakened by surrounding objects.

While Porter was in command of the *Enterprise*, and at anchor in the port of Malta, an English sailor came alongside and insulted the officers and crew by abusive language. Captain Porter overhearing the scurrilous epithets he vociferated, ordered a boatswain's mate to seize him and give him a flogging at the gangway. This well-merited chastisement excited the indignation of the governor of Malta, who considered it a daring outrage, and gave orders that the forts should not permit the *Enterprise* to depart. No sooner was Captain Porter informed of it, than he got his vessel ready for action, weighed anchor, and with lighted matches and every man at his station, with the avowed determination of firing the town if attacked, sailed between the batteries and departed unmolested.

Shortly after this occurrence, in passing through the Straits of Gibraltar, he was attacked by twelve Spanish gunboats, who either mistook or pretended to mistake his vessel for a British brig. As soon, however, as he was able to near them, they were assailed with such rapid and well directed volleys as quickly compelled them to shear off. This affair took place in sight of Gibraltar, and in presence of several ships of the British navy; it was, therefore, a



matter of notoriety, and spoken of in terms of the highest applause.

After an absence of five years, passed in unremitted and arduous service, Captain Porter returned to the United States, and shortly after was married to Miss Anderson, daughter of the member of congress from Pennsylvania. Being appointed to the command of the flotilla, on the New Orleans station, he discharged, with faithfulness and activity, the irksome duty of enforcing the embargo and non-intercourse laws. He likewise performed an important service to his country, by ferreting out and capturing a pirate, a native of France, who, in a small well-armed schooner, had for some time infested the Chesapeake; and who, growing bolder by impunity, had committed many acts of depredation, until his maraudings became so serious as to attract the attention of government.

While commanding on the Orleans station, the father of Captain Porter died, an officer under his command. He had lived to see his wish fulfilled, in beholding his son a skilful and enterprising sailor, rising rapidly in his profession, and in the estimation of his country.

The climate of New Orleans disagreeing with the health of Captain Porter and his family, he solicited to be ordered to some other station, and was, accordingly, appointed to the command of the Essex frigate.

At the time of the declaration of war against England, the Essex was undergoing repairs at New York, and the celerity with which she was fitted for sea reflected great credit on her commander. On the 3d of July, 1812, he sailed from Sandy Hook on



a cruise, which was not marked by any incident of consequence, excepting the capture of the British sloop of war *Alert*, Captain Langhorne. Either undervaluing the untried prowess of our tars, or mistaking the force of the *Essex*, she ran down on her weather quarter, gave three cheers, and commenced an action. In a few minutes she struck her colours, being cut to pieces, with three men wounded, and seven feet water in her hold. To relieve himself from the great number of prisoners, taken in this and former prizes, Captain Porter made a cartel of the *Alert*, with orders to proceed to St. Johns, Newfoundland, and thence to New York. She arrived safe, being the first ship of war taken from the enemy, and her flag the first British flag sent to the seat of government during the war of 1812.\*

Captain Porter, after the refitting of his ship, sailed from the Delaware on the 27th of October, 1812. He shaped his course for the coast of Brazil, where, according to arrangements with Commodore Bainbridge, several places were appointed for rendezvous. During his cruise in that quarter he captured his Britannic majesty's packet ship *Nocton*, from which he took about 11,000 pounds sterling in specie, and then despatched her for America. Upon hearing of the capture of the *Java* by Commodore Bainbridge, he was obliged to return to port, where he heard that the *Hornet* had been captured by the *Montague*, that the British force on the coast had been increased, and that several ships were in pursuit of him. Knowing that he occupied a hazardous place, he determined

\* *Analectic Magazine.*



to abandon it, and accordingly he shaped his course southward, rounded Cape Horn, off which place he suffered greatly from the severity of the gales, and proceeded into the Pacific Ocean. From the want of provision it became necessary to put into some port. Accordingly he ran into Valparaiso, where he arrived on the 14th of March, 1813.

Having obtained a sufficient quantity of provision, he coasted the shores of Chili and Peru and met with a Peruvian corsair, that had captured two whaling ships on the coast of Chili and had on board the crews of the two ships, as prisoners, consisting of twenty-four Americans. The commander of the corsair attempted to justify his conduct by alleging himself to be an ally of Great Britain and expecting a war between Spain and the United States. Captain Porter, finding that he determined to persist in his aggressions, lightened him of his armament by throwing it into the sea, released the prisoners, and then directed a polite letter to the viceroy, in which he gave his reasons for so doing, which he delivered to the captain. Upon proceeding to the port of Lima he recaptured one of the American vessels as she was entering the port.

He cruised for several months in the Pacific, making great havoc among the English traders, and was particularly destructive to those engaged in the spermaceti whale fishery. He took many with valuable cargoes; one of the captured vessels he retained as a store ship; he equipped her with twenty guns and called her the *Essex Junior*, appointing Lieutenant Downes as commander, while some of the others were given up to the prisoners, some sent



to Valparaiso and laid up, and three sent to America. Captain Porter, now having a little squadron under his command, became the terror of those seas. He gained from his prizes a sufficient supply of provisions, medicines, naval stores, clothing, and money; so that he was able to pay his officers and men without drawing on the government, and was able to remain at sea without sickness or inconvenience.

From the extent of his depredations he spread alarm and anxiety throughout all the ports of the Pacific, and created great disturbance in those of Great Britain. The merchants trembled with apprehension for the fate of their property, which was afloat on those waters, while the nation's pride was humbled, when it beheld a single frigate bearing the sceptre over the whole waters of the Pacific; in defiance to their numerous fleets, destroying their commerce and excluding their merchants from all western ports, and almost banishing the British flag from those climes where it had so long spread its folds to the breeze in proud predominance. The manner in which Captain Porter conducted his cruise baffled pursuit. Those who were sent in search of him were distracted by vague accounts, and were entirely unable to discover any traces by which they might be able to encounter him. Keeping in the open sea and touching only at those desolate islands which form the Gallipagos he left no traces by which he might be followed or discovered. Although he was deprived of all intelligence from land, and unable to gain any knowledge of home affairs, he often received a correct account of his enemies from the various prizes which he had captured. Lieutenant



Downes having returned from conveying the prizes to Valparaiso, brought word of the expected arrival of Commodore Hillyar in the *Phœbe* frigate, rating thirty-six guns, accompanied by two sloops of war. Loaded with spoil, and sated with the easy and inglorious capture of merchantmen, Captain Porter desired to signalize his cruise by some brilliant victory, meeting the enemy on equal terms.

From having remained at sea for such a length of time some of the timbers were impaired and needed renewal, while the frigate required some other repairs to enable her to face the foe. For this purpose he repaired to the island of Nooaheevah, one of the Washington group, discovered by Captain Ingraham of Boston, accompanied by several of his prizes. The inhabitants in the vicinity of the harbour received Captain Porter with marks of friendship; and they supplied him with abundance of provision, with which the island abounded. Having calked and completely overhauled the ship, made her a new set of water casks, and taken on board a sufficient supply of provision for four months, from the prizes, which he secured under the guns of a battery erected for their protection, he sailed for the coast of Chili on the 12th of December, 1813, leaving Lieutenant Gamble of the marines, with twenty-one men, in command of the battery, with orders to proceed to Valparaiso after a certain time.

Having cruised off the coast of Chili with the expectation of meeting with Captain Hillyar, without success, he proceeded to the port of Valparaiso, with the hope of falling in with him there; and, if disappointed in this wish, he might be able to capture



some merchant ships which were expected from England. While lying in this port Captain Hillyar arrived, having long sought for the Essex, but without success, and having almost given up all hopes of ever meeting with her. He was accompanied by the sloop of war Cherub, which was strongly armed and manned. Contrary to Captain Porter's expectation, the Phœbe herself was far superior to the Essex. The united force of the Phœbe and Cherub amounted to eighty-one guns and 500 men. While the force of the Essex consisted of but forty-six guns, all of which, excepting six long twelves, were thirty-two pound carronades, only serviceable in close fighting. Her crew having been much reduced by the manning of prizes, amounted to but 255 men. The Essex Junior, being only intended as a store ship, carried but ten eighteen pound carronades and ten short sixes, with a complement of only 60 men. The Phœbe and Cherub, having been sent out expressly to search for and capture the Essex, were in prime order and good discipline, with picked crews, and hoisted flags bearing the motto, "God and our country, British sailors' best rights: traitors offend both."

This was in opposition to the American motto of "Free trade and sailors' rights," and the latter part of it being suggested by error tenderly cherished, that our crews were composed of British seamen. In reply to this motto Captain Porter hoisted at his mizen: "God, our country, and liberty: tyrants offend them." On entering the port the Phœbe was brought into the power of Captain Porter, who, on account of the neutrality of the place, did not wish to take advantage of the exposed situation of his enemy.



This forbearance was acknowledged by Commodore Hillyar, and he gave his word of honour to observe like conduct while in port, which he accordingly followed for a time.

On receiving a sufficient supply of provision on board, the *Phœbe* and *Cherub* went off the port, where they cruised for six weeks, keeping up a continual blockade of Captain Porter; who from the inferiority of his number was unwilling to risk an action. After repeated endeavours, finding himself unable to bring the *Phœbe* into single action or into equal combat, or to provoke a challenge from Commodore Hillyar, he determined to put to sea. Finding after repeated trials that the *Essex* was a superior sailer to either of the enemy's ships, it was determined that he should let the enemy chase her off, and thereby give the *Essex Junior* a chance of escape.

On the day following, the 28th of March, the wind began to blow from the south; the *Essex* having parted her larboard cable, dragged her starboard anchor out to sea. Having all sails set; and perceiving the enemy close in with the western side of the bay, and that there was a possibility of passing to windward and gaining the sea by superior sailing, Captain Porter determined to hazard the attempt. He took in his topgallant sails, and fitted up for the purpose, but unfortunately, on rounding the point, a heavy squall struck the ship, and bore away the main topmast, and threw the men who were aloft into the sea and drowned them. Both ships immediately gave chase, and Captain Porter finding that from the crippled state of his ship it would be unsafe to proceed, determined to run into port again and repair



damages. But finding it impossible to gain the common anchorage which he had left, he put into a small bay about three quarters of a mile from the battery and to the leeward of it, on the east of the harbour, and dropped anchor within pistol shot of the shore. Supposing himself secure, he thought only of repairing the damages he had sustained, expecting that the enemy would respect the neutrality of the place. The wary and menacing approach of the enemy showed that they had a more important object in view than to exchange kindness with a generous enemy. Their instructions were to crush the noxious foe, that had been so destructive to the commerce of their country; and being furnished with a force competent to this service; and having the enemy once in their power, they had no desire to wave their superiority, and give him a chance to escape and continue his work of destruction. Displaying their motto flags and having jacks at all their masts' heads, Captain Porter soon discovered the real danger of his situation. With all despatch he prepared for action and endeavoured to get a spring on his cable; but was unsuccessful, when at fifty-four minutes past 3 P. M. the enemy commenced the action. The *Phœbe* having laid herself under his stern and the *Cherub* on his starboard bow, the latter finding herself in a dangerous place and exposed to a hot fire, bore up, and ran under his stern also, where they both kept up a raking fire, to which Captain Porter was unable to make any effective return. He, however, succeeded three different times in getting springs on his cables, for the purpose of bringing his broadside to bear on the enemy; but they were as often shot away by the



excessive fire to which he was exposed. For defence against this tremendous attack he was obliged to rely on three long twelve pounders, which he had run out of the stern ports; and which were worked with such skill and bravery as in half an hour to do such injury to the enemy's ships as to compel him to haul off and repair losses. It was evidently the intention of Commodore Hillyar to risk nothing from the daring courage of his enemy, but to take her at as cheap a rate as possible. All his movements were calm and deliberate, while the situation of Captain Porter was distressing; surrounded by the killed and wounded, and from the crippled state of his ship unable to help himself, he lay awaiting the convenience of the enemy to renew the scene of slaughter without any hope of escape or retaliation. The brave crew of the *Essex* evinced their determination to hold out to the last by hoisting ensigns in their shattered rigging and jacks in different parts of the ship. The enemy having repaired, placed themselves on the starboard quarter of the *Essex*, and again commenced their work of destruction, out of reach of her carronades. Captain Porter saw there was no hope of injuring the enemy without bearing up and becoming the assailant; and this he determined to do. From the shattered state of his rigging he was unable to raise any other sail than the flying jib, which he caused to be set, and having cut his cable he bore down upon the enemy with the intention of laying the *Phœbe* on board.

He was now able to close with the enemy, when the firing on both sides was tremendous and destructive. The *Essex* was in a truly deplorable condition; her deck was strewn with the dead and dying, her



cockpit filled with wounded; she had been several times on fire and was in fact a total wreck; still a feeble hope sprung up that she might be victorious, from the circumstance of the Cherub being compelled to haul off by her crippled state; she, however, did not return to close action again, but kept up a distant firing with her long guns. The Phœbe also being seriously injured began to edge off and choose the distance which best suited her long guns. The Essex was unable, from her shattered state, to take advantage of single combat with the Phœbe, and for want of sail was unable to keep at close quarters with her. Both ships now kept up a tremendous and destructive fire, which made dreadful havoc among the crew of the Essex, many of whose guns were rendered useless, while many had their whole crews destroyed, and one gun in particular was manned three times; fifteen men were slain at it in the course of the action. Having lost all hope of closing with the enemy, Captain Porter determined to run his ship on shore, land the crew, and destroy her. Having approached within musket shot of the shore, and with every prospect of succeeding, the wind shifted and bore her down upon the Phœbe, exposing her again to a dreadful and raking fire. The ship was now totally unmanageable; but as her head was toward the enemy and he to leeward, Captain Porter conceived a faint hope of being able to board her. At this moment Lieutenant Downes of the Essex Junior came on board to receive orders, expecting that Captain Porter would soon be made prisoner. Finding from the enemy's putting his helm up, that the last attempt at boarding would not succeed, Captain Porter directed him to return



to his own ship and prepare for destroying or defending her in case of attack. The Cherub kept up a hot fire on him during his return. The enemy still kept up a constant and destructive fire on the Essex, dealing death and destruction among her brave crew. Still her commander persisted, determined to hold out in the unequal and almost hopeless conflict. Every expedient that a fertile and inventive mind could suggest was resorted to, that they might escape from the hands of the enemy. A halser was bent to the sheet anchor, and the anchor cut from the bows, to bring the ship's head around, and bring her broadside again to bear upon the enemy. This succeeded; but, from the crippled state of the enemy, they were unable to hold their own, Captain Porter thought she might drift out of gunshot before she discovered that he had cast anchor.

The halser unfortunately parted, and with it the last lingering hope of the Essex. At this moment the state of the Essex was lamentable. She was on fire both forward and aft, the flames bursting up the hatchway, her decks strewn with the mangled corpses of her brave crew, while many of her officers and men lay wounded in every part of the ship. A council of the officers of division having been called, Captain Porter was surprised to find only acting Lieutenant Stephen Decatur McKnight remaining, the rest having either been killed or wounded and carried below. In the mean time the enemy, in consequence of the smoothness of the water, lay secure at a distance, where she kept up a constant and destructive fire, aiming with coolness and certainty, hitting the hull at every shot. Captain Porter having



despaired of saving the ship, was compelled at twenty minutes past six P. M. to give the painful command to strike the colours. The enemy continued firing, and Captain Porter thinking he intended to show no quarter, was about to rehoist his flag and fight until he sunk, when they ceased their attack ten minutes after the surrender, in which time several men on board the Essex were killed. The loss of the Essex is a sufficient testimony of the desperate bravery with which she was defended. The general conduct of the officers and men bears ample testimony to their heroism. Out of 255 men which composed her crew, 58 were killed, 39 severely wounded, 27 slightly, and 31 missing, making in all 154. She was completely cut to pieces, and so covered with the dead and dying, with mangled limbs, with brains and blood, and the ghastly forms of death, that the officer who came on board to take possession of her, though accustomed to scenes of slaughter, fainted at the shocking spectacle. After the affair of the Argus and Pelican, it was asserted that our sailors were brave only while successful and unhurt, but that the sight of slaughter filled them with dismay. This battle clearly proves that they are capable of the highest exercise of courage. From the distance and position of the enemy, this battle was chiefly fought on the part of the Essex by six twelve pounders only, yet the damage sustained by the enemy was severe. Their masts and yards were badly crippled, their hulls much cut up, the Phœbe, especially, received eighteen twelve pound shot below her water line, some three feet under water. Their loss in killed and wounded was not ascertained, but must



have been severe; the first lieutenant of the *Phœbe* was killed, and Captain Tucker of the *Cherub* was severely wounded. It was with some difficulty that the *Phœbe* and *Essex* were kept afloat until they anchored next morning in the harbour of Valparaiso. This battle was fought so near the shore that the neighbouring heights were filled with the inhabitants of Valparaiso, who were spectators of it; and some of the shot fell among the citizens who had ventured down upon the beach. A generous anxiety ran throughout the multitude for the fate of the *Essex*; bursts of delight arose when any change of battle seemed to favour her; the eager spectators were seen to wring their hands, and utter groans of sympathy when the transient hope failed, and the gallant little frigate once more became the scene of deliberate slaughter. After the battle, as Captain Porter acknowledges, Commodore Hillyar endeavoured as much as lay in his power to alleviate their suffering and distress by the most generous and delicate deportment towards both officers and men, commanding that the property of every person should be restored. Captain Porter and his crew were paroled and permitted to return to the United States. Off the port of New York they were overhauled by the *Saturn* razee, whose commander questioned the authority of Commodore Hillyar to grant a passport. Captain Porter then told the boarding officer that he gave up his parole and considered himself a prisoner of war, and as such should use all means of escape. In consequence of this threat, the *Essex Junior* was compelled to remain under the lee of the *Saturn* all night; but the next morning Captain Porter put off in his



boat, though thirty miles from the shore ; and notwithstanding he was pursued by the *Saturn* he landed safely on Long Island. Various interesting and romantic rumours had reached this country concerning him during his cruise in the Pacific, which had excited the curiosity of the public to see this modern Sinbad ; on his arrival at New York his carriage was surrounded by the populace, who took out the horses, and dragged him, with shouts and acclamations, to his lodgings.

Of the remainder of Commodore Porter's eventful life our scanty limits compel us to give but an imperfect sketch.

After the conclusion of the war in 1815, Commodore Porter was appointed a navy commissioner. He was a member of that board until the year 1821, during which time he devoted the whole of his attention to the interests of the navy. In 1821 he volunteered to take command of the West India squadron for the suppression of piracy. A more difficult and hazardous service was scarcely ever undertaken. A long and constant exposure to a tropical sun by day, and deadly chills and damps by night, constantly threatened the lives of the little bands, who were seeking, in open boats and vessels of the smallest size, the haunts of the freebooters, among the rocks and shoals of the uninhabited coasts of Cuba and St. Domingo. They performed it, however, with such signal zeal and success, that at the end of sixty days from the commencement of his operations, the commodore, in his official despatches, was able to say, "that there was not a pirate afloat in the region of Matanzas, the scene of their greatest depredations,



larger than an open boat; and not a single piratical act had been committed on the coast of Cuba since he had organized and arranged his forces." He, however, very much regretted that the gazettes of the United States had given publicity to the fitting out of his armament, its destination and object, long before his arrival in the West Indies, which enabled the pirates to change their ground, and prevented their complete destruction; which, otherwise, he should have accomplished. Many of them sought other hiding places in the southern and south-western coasts of Cuba, near Cape Antonio; whence, at an after period, they renewed their depredations.\*

In October, 1824, Commodore Porter, in resentment of an insult offered to the flag of the United States, by the authorities of Foxardo in Porto Rico, landed a force at the place and compelled a public apology. For this act he was recalled from the station where he had rendered such eminent service, and in consequence of the action of a court martial was suspended from his command for six months. The commodore felt himself greatly aggrieved by these proceedings. He had voluntarily relinquished an easy and honourable station, as commissioner of the navy, for a very difficult and dangerous service, which he had executed with great zeal and success, resulting in important benefits to his country. For a single error in judgment, in relation to the extent of his powers, which had been attended with no evil, and which fell far short of other cases that had been overlooked, he had been taken from his com-

\* Perkins' Historical Sketches, chap. 14.



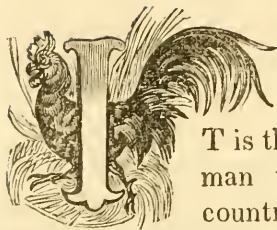
mand, ordered home, arrested, tried by a court martial, and suspended. Under these impressions he resigned his command in the navy, and entered into a negotiation with the Mexican government, by which he became commander-in-chief of all the naval forces of Mexico, with a salary of twenty-five thousand dollars a year.

In 1829 Commodore Porter left the service of Mexico, and returning to this country received the appointment of consul general to the Barbary powers. After the capture of Algiers by the French, he was appointed *chargé d'affaires* to Constantinople. He subsequently returned to this country, and was sent out as minister to the Porte. All the important negotiations and treaties of our government with that of Turkey subsequent to that period have been conducted by him; and he still retained this highly honourable and important appointment at the time of his decease, which took place March 28th, 1843.

Commodore Porter was one of the most active, courageous and able officers that have served under the American flag. With a chivalrous disregard of ease and interest, he always sought the post of greatest danger and difficulty, and was always found equal to any emergency in which he was placed by the demands of duty and honour. If he was prone to act upon impulse, his impulses were always of a noble and generous kind, worthy of the high-spirited defender of a national flag. His services were eminent in every station which he filled, and they will ever be remembered with gratitude by his countrymen.



## WILLIAM BURROWS.



T is the laudable desire of every brave man to receive the praises of his countrymen; but there is a dearer and more cherished wish that grows closer to his heart: it is to live in the recollections of those he loves and honours; to leave behind him a name, at the mention of which the bosom of friendship shall glow, the eye of affection shall brighten; which shall be a legacy of honest pride to his family, causing it to dwell on his worthy deeds, and glory in his memory. The bravest soldier would not willingly expose himself to certain danger, if he thought that death were to be followed by oblivion; he might rise above the mere dread of bodily pain, but human pride shrinks from the darkness and silence of the grave.

It is the duty, and it is likewise the policy, therefore, of a nation, to pay distinguished honour to the memories of those who have fallen in its service. It is, after all, but a cheap reward for sufferings and death; but it is a reward that will prompt others to the sacrifice, when they see that it is faithfully discharged. The youthful bosom warms with emulation at the praises of departed heroes. The marble monument that bears the story of a nation's admiration and gratitude, becomes an object of ambition. Death,



the great terror of warfare, ceases to be an evil when graced with such distinctions; and thus one hero may be said, like a phoenix, to spring from the ashes of his predecessor.

In the gallant young officer who is the subject of the present memoir, we shall see these observations verified; he fought with the illustrious example of his brethren before his eyes, and died with the funeral honours of Lawrence fresh in his recollection.

Lieutenant William Burrows was born in 1785, at Kinderton, near Philadelphia, the seat of his father, William Ward Burrows, Esq., of South Carolina. He was educated chiefly under the eye of his parent, who was a gentleman of accomplished mind and polished manners. It is not known whether he was intended for any particular profession; but great pains were taken to instruct him in the living languages; and at the age of thirteen he was as well acquainted with the German as with his mother tongue; he was likewise kept rigidly at the study of the French, for which, however, he showed a singular aversion. The dawning of his character was pleasing and auspicious; to quickness of intellect he added an amiable disposition and generous sensibility of heart. His character, however, soon assumed more distinct and peculiar features; a shade of reserve began gradually to settle on his manners. At an age when the feelings of other children are continually bursting forth, he seemed to hush his into subjection. He appeared to retire within himself: to cherish a solitary independence of mind, and to rely as much as possible on his own resources. It seemed as if his young imagination had already glanced forth on the rough scene



of his future life, and that he was silently preparing himself for its vicissitudes. Nor is it improbable that such was the case. Though little communicative of his hopes and wishes, it was evident that his genius had taken its bias. Even among the gentle employments and elegant pursuits of a polite education, his family were astonished to perceive the rugged symptoms of the sailor continually breaking forth: and his drawing master would sometimes surprise him neglecting the allotted task, to paint the object of his silent adoration—a gallant ship of war.

On finding that such was the determined bent of his inclinations, care was immediately taken to instruct him in naval science. A midshipman's warrant was procured for him in November, 1799, and in the following January he joined the sloop of war Portsmouth, commanded by Captain M'Neale, in which he sailed to France. This cruise, while it confirmed his predilection for the life he had adopted, made him acquainted with his own deficiencies. Instead of the puerile vanity and harmless ostentation which striplings generally evince when they first put on their uniform, and feel the importance of command, it was with difficulty he could be persuaded to wear the naval dress, until he had proved himself worthy of it by his services. The same mixture of genuine diffidence and proud humility was observed in the discharge of his duties towards his inferiors; he felt the novelty of his situation, and shrunk from the exercise of authority over the aged and veteran sailor, whom he considered his superior in seamanship. On his return home, therefore, he requested a furlough of some months, to strengthen him in the principles



of navigation. He also resumed the study of the French language, the necessity for which he had experienced in his late cruise, and from his knowledge of grammatical elements, joined to vigorous application, he soon learned to use it with fluency.

He was afterwards ordered on duty, and served on board of various ships until 1803, when he was ordered to the frigate *Constitution*, Commodore Preble. Soon after the arrival of that ship in the Mediterranean, the commodore, noticing his zeal and abilities, made him an acting lieutenant. In the course of the Tripolitan war he distinguished himself on various occasions by his intrepidity; particularly in one instance, when he rushed into the midst of a mutinous body, and seized the ringleader, at the imminent hazard of his life. After his return to the United States, in 1807, he was in different services, and among others, as first lieutenant of the *Hornet*. While in this situation, he distinguished himself greatly during a violent and dangerous gale, insomuch that his brother officers attributed the preservation of the ship entirely to his presence of mind and consummate seamanship.

The details of a sailor's life are generally brief, and little satisfactory. We expect miraculous stories from men who rove the deep, visit every corner of the world, and mingle in storms and battles; and are mortified to find them treating these subjects with provoking brevity. The fact is, these circumstances that excite our wonder are trite and familiar to their minds. He whose whole life is a tissue of perils and adventures, passes lightly over scenes at which the landsman, accustomed to the security of his fireside,



shudders even in imagination. Mere bravery ceases to be a matter of ostentation, when every one around him is brave; and hairbreadth 'scapes are commonplace topics among men whose very profession consists in the hourly hazard of existence.

In seeking, therefore, after interesting anecdotes concerning those naval officers whose exploits have excited public enthusiasm, our curiosity is continually baffled by general accounts, or meager particulars, given with the technical brevity of a log-book. We have thus been obliged to pass cursorily over several years of Burrows' seafaring life, though doubtless chequered by many striking incidents.

From what we can collect, he seems to have been a marked and eccentric character. His peculiarity, instead of being smoothed and worn down by mingling with the world, became more and more prominent, as he advanced in life. He had centred all his pride in becoming a thorough and accomplished sailor, and regarded every thing else with indifference. His manners were an odd compound of carelessness and punctilio, frankness and taciturnity. He stood aloof from the familiarity of strangers, and in his contempt of what he considered fawning and profession, was sometimes apt to offend by blunt simplicity, or chill by reserve. But his character, when once known, seemed to attach by its very eccentricities, and though little studious of pleasing, he soon became a decided favourite. He had an original turn of thought and a strong perception of every thing ludicrous and characteristic. Though scarcely ever seen to laugh himself, he possessed an exquisite vein of dry humour which he would occasionally indulge in the hours of hilarity,



and, without moving a muscle of his own countenance, would set the table in a roar. When under the influence of this lurking drollery, every thing he said and did was odd and whimsical. His replies were remarkably happy, and, heightened by the peculiarity of his manner, and the provoking gravity of his demeanour, were sources of infinite merriment to his associates. It was his delight to put on the dress of the common sailor, and explore the haunts of low life, drawing from thence traits of character and comic scenes, with which he would sometimes entertain his messmates.

But with all this careless and eccentric manner, he possessed a heart full of noble qualities. He was proud of spirit, but perfectly unassuming; jealous of his own rights, but scrupulously considerate of those of others. His friendships were strong and sincere; and he was zealous in the performance of secret and important services for those to whom he was attached. There was a rough benevolence in his disposition, that manifested itself in a thousand odd ways; nothing delighted him more than to surprise the distressed with relief, and he was noted for his kindness and condescension towards the humble and dependant. His companions were full of his generous deeds, and he was the darling of the common sailors. Such was the sterling worth that lay encrusted in an unpromising exterior, and hidden from the world by a forbidding and taciturn reserve.

With such strong sensibilities and solitary pride of character, it was the lot of Burrows to be wounded in that tender part where the feelings of officers seem most assailable. In his promotion to a lieutenantcy



he had the mortification to find himself outranked by junior officers, some of whom he had commanded in the Tripolitan war. He remonstrated to the navy department, but without redress. On Mr. Hamilton's going into office, he stated to him his claims, and, impatient of the slight which he conceived he had suffered, offered to resign his commission, which, however, was not accepted. Whether the wrongs of which he complained were real or imaginary, they preyed deeply on his mind. He seemed for a time to grow careless of the world and of himself; withdrew more than ever from society, and abandoned himself to the silent broodings of a wounded spirit. Perhaps this morbid sensibility of feeling might in some measure have been occasioned by infirmity of body, his health having been broken by continual and severe duty; but it belongs to a saturnine character, like that of Burrows, to feel deeply and sorely. Men of gayer spirits and more mercurial temperament, may readily shake off vexation, or bustle it away amid the amusements and occupations of the world; but Burrows was scanty in his pleasures, limited in his resources, single in his ambition. Naval distinction was the object of all his hopes and pride; it was the only light that led him on and cheered his way, and whatever intervened left him in darkness and dreariness of heart.

Finding his resignation was not accepted, and feeling temporary disgust at the service, he applied for a furlough, which, with some difficulty, he obtained. He then entered as first officer on board the merchant ship *Thomas Penrose*, Captain Ansley, and sailed on a commercial voyage to Canton. On his return



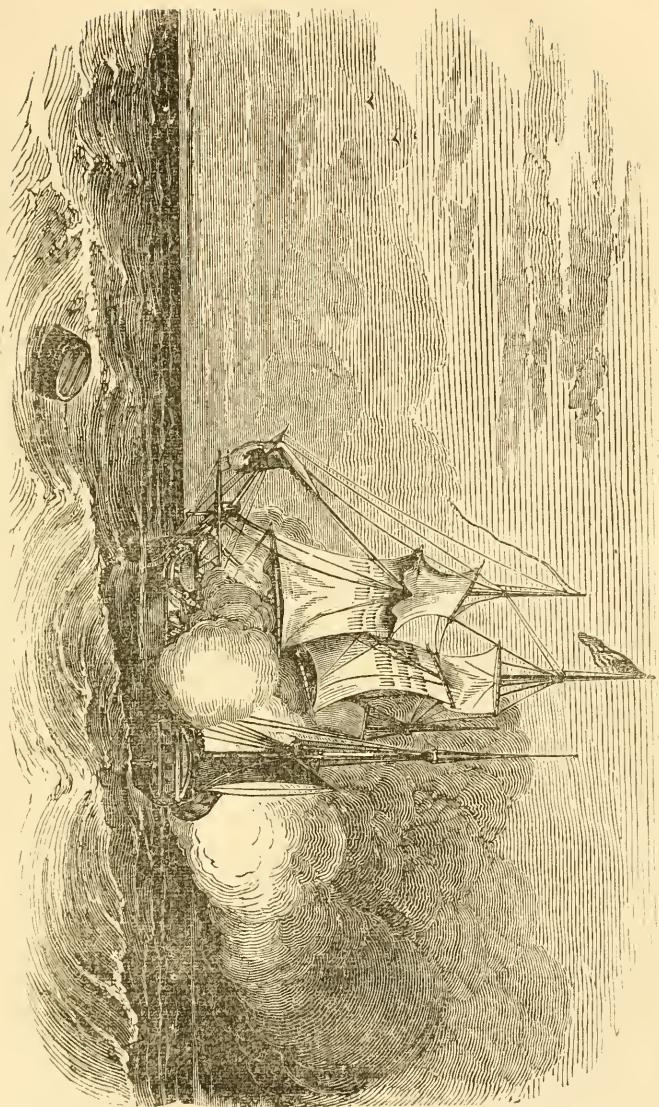
passage he was captured and carried into Barbadoes, but permitted to come home, on parole. Immediately on his being exchanged, in June, 1813, he was appointed to the command of the brig *Enterprise*, (16 guns,) at Portsmouth.

This appointment seemed to infuse new life and spirits into Burrows, and to change his whole deportment. His proper pride was gratified on having a separate command; he no longer felt like an unimportant individual, but that he had rank and station to support. He threw off a great deal of his habitual reserve, became urbane and attentive; and those who had lately looked upon him as a mere misanthrope, were delighted with the manly frankness of his manners.

On the 1st of September, the *Enterprise* sailed from Portsmouth on a cruise. On the 5th, early in the morning, they espied a brig in shore getting under way. They reconnoitred her for a while to ascertain her character, of which they were soon informed by her hoisting three British ensigns, and firing a shot as a challenge. The *Enterprise* then hauled upon a wind, stood out of the bay, and prepared for action. A calm for some time delayed the encounter; it was succeeded by a breeze from the south-west, which gave our vessel the weathergage. After manœuvring for a while to the windward, in order to try her sailing with the enemy, and to ascertain his force, the *Enterprise*, about 3 P. M., shortened sail, hoisted three ensigns, fired a gun, tacked, and ran down with an intention to bring him to close quarters. When within half pistol shot the enemy gave three cheers, and commenced the action with his starboard



Enterprise and Rover.









broadside. The cheers and the broadside were returned on our part, and the action became general. In about five minutes after the battle had commenced, the gallant Burrows received a musket ball in his body and fell; he, however, refused to be carried below, but continued on deck through the action. The active command was then taken by Lieutenant M'Call, who conducted himself with great skill and coolness. The enemy was out-mancœuvred and cut up: his maintopmast and topsail-yard shot away; a position gained on his starboard bow, and a raking fire kept up, until his guns were silenced and he cried for quarters, saying, that as his colours were nailed to the mast he could not haul them down. The prize proved to be his Britannic majesty's brig Boxer, of 14 guns. The number of her crew is a matter of conjecture and dispute. Sixty-four prisoners were taken, seventeen of whom were wounded. How many of the dead were thrown into the sea during the action it is impossible to say;\* the British return only four as killed; courtesy forbids us to question the veracity of an officer on mere presumption; but it is ever the natural wish of the vanquished to depreciate their force; and, in truth, we have seen with regret various instances of disingenuousness on the part of the enemy, in their statements of our naval encoun-

\* In a letter from Captain Hull to Commodore Bainbridge he describes the state of the Boxer when brought into port: and observes, "We find it impossible to get at the number of killed; no papers are found by which we can ascertain it. I however counted ninety hammocks which were in her netting with beds in them, besides several beds without hammocks; and she had excellent accommodations for all her officers below in state-rooms, so that I have no doubt that she had one hundred men on board."



ters. But we will not enter into disputes of this kind. It is enough that the enemy entered into the battle with a bravado at the mast head, and a confidence of success; this either implied a consciousness of his own force, or a low opinion of his antagonist; in either case he was mistaken. It is a fruitless task to vindicate victories against the excuses of the vanquished—sufficient for the victor is the joy of his triumph, he should allow the enemy the consolation of accounting for it.

We turn gladly from such an idle discussion to notice the last moments of the worthy Burrows. There needs no elaborate pencil to impart pathos and grandeur to the death of a brave man. The simple anecdotes given in simple terms by his surviving comrades, present more striking pictures, than could be wrought up by the most refined attempts of art. "At twenty minutes past three P. M.," says one account, "our brave commander fell, and while lying on the deck, refusing to be carried below, raised his head and requested that *the flag might never be struck*." In this situation he remained during the rest of the engagement, regardless of bodily pain; regardless of the life-blood fast ebbing from his wound; watching with anxious eye the vicissitudes of battle; cheering his men by his voice, but animating them still more by his glorious example. When the sword of the vanquished enemy was presented to him, we are told that he clasped his hands and exclaimed, "I am satisfied, I die contented." He now permitted himself to be carried below, and the necessary attentions were paid to save his life, or alleviate his sufferings. His wound, however, was



beyond the power of surgery, and he breathed his last within a few hours after the victory.

The commander of the *Boxer*, Captain Samuel Blythe, was killed early in the action by a cannon ball; had he lived he might have defended his ship more desperately, but it is not probable with more success. He was an officer of distinguished merit; having received a sword from government for his good conduct under Sir James L. Yeo, in the capture of Cayenne. He was also one of the pall-bearers of our lamented Lawrence, when buried at Halifax. It was his fate now to receive like courtesy at the hands of his enemy. His remains, in company with those of the brave Burrows, were brought to Portland, where they were interred with military honours. It was a striking and affecting sight, to behold two gallant commanders, who had lately been arrayed in deadly hostility against each other, descending into one quiet grave, there to mingle their dust peacefully together.

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In concluding the present work, the author cannot but express his regret that the narrow limits, originally prescribed for its extent, have constrained him to omit the lives of many commanders, who have won distinction in the naval service of the country. A considerable mass of materials still remains, although there is not a sufficient quantity to furnish another volume of the same size. It is his intention at some future time to give a second series of lives on the same plan; and he would esteem it a special favour if the families or friends of deceased commanders, or



any other persons who possess letters or documents which may serve as materials for a future volume of Naval Biography, would permit him the use of them for that purpose.

It is due to the merits of several highly distinguished officers to say, that notices of their lives would have been inserted in the present work, but for the difficulty of obtaining the requisite materials. This deficiency, the author hopes, will be supplied, should he ever have it in his power to resume his task. The theme has been found much more fertile than was supposed at the outset of the undertaking. There are many highly deserving officers whose characters and actions are comparatively unknown to fame; but whose achievements in naval warfare may well bear comparison with those of the heroes who have been so fortunate as to perform their parts on a more conspicuous theatre. Towards these the author trusts that history hereafter will do justice; and that many noble actions in our naval annals, hitherto unnoticed, may be placed in their proper light, and receive their merited meed of praise from a grateful country.

THE END.

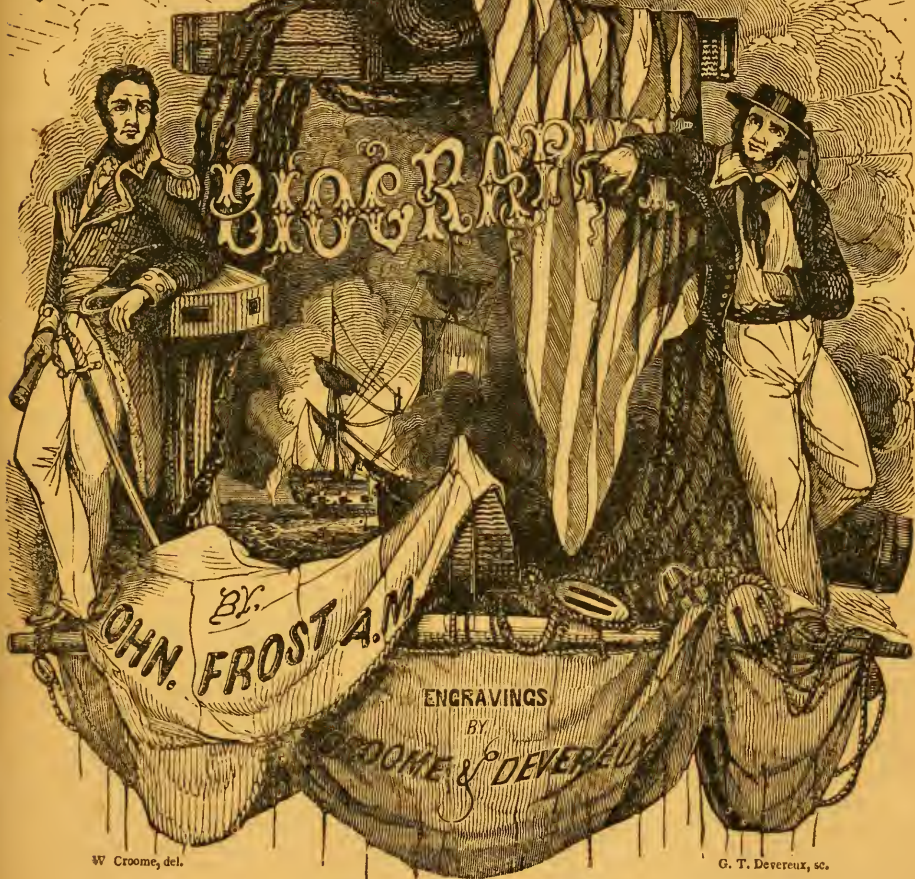


*No. 105*  
*Deposited April 29th 1843.*

*E. H. Butler*  
*author*

*No. 105*  
*1843*

# AMERICAN NAVAL



W. Croome, del.

G. T. Devereux, sc.

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**Published by E. H. BUTLER.**

1843.

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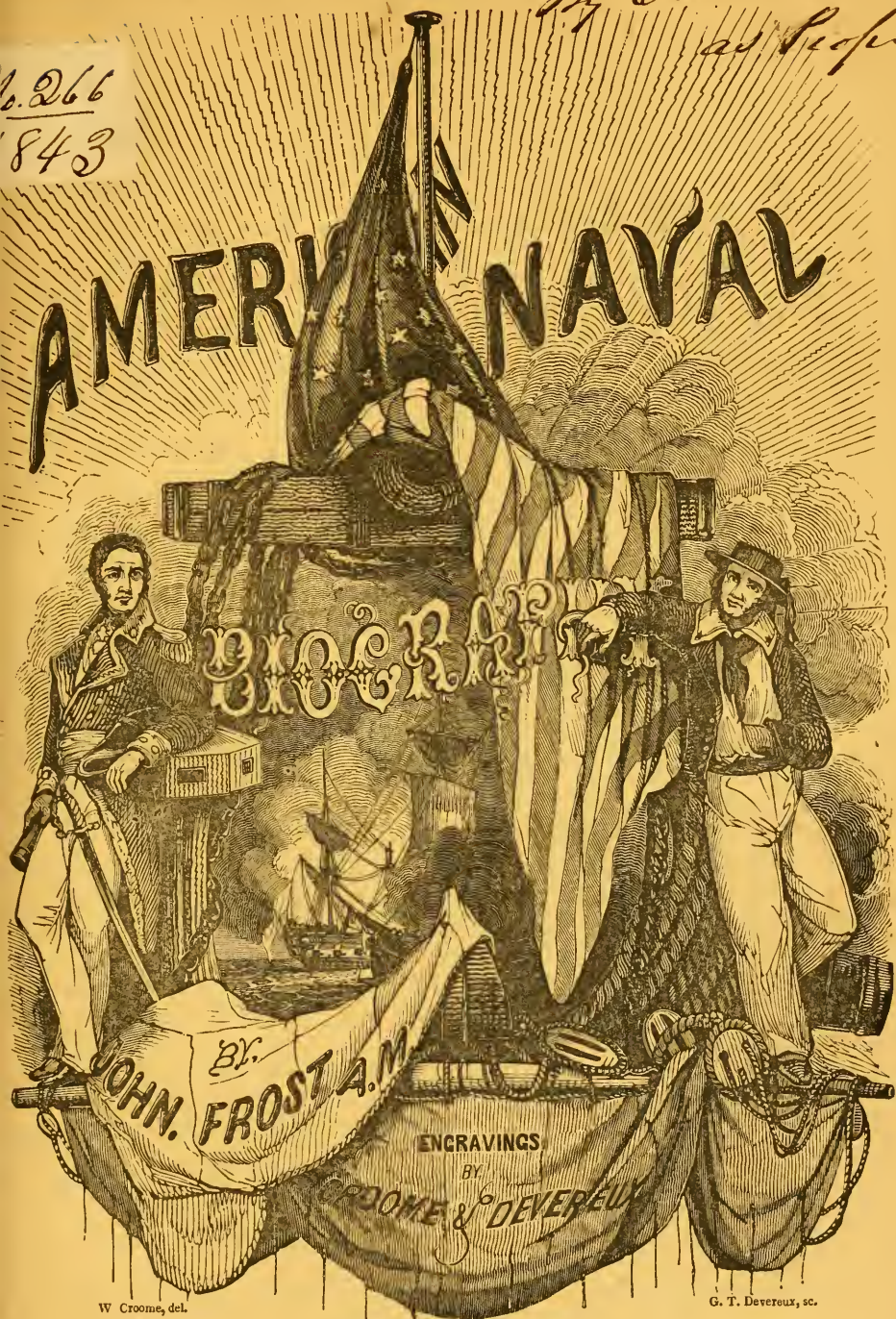
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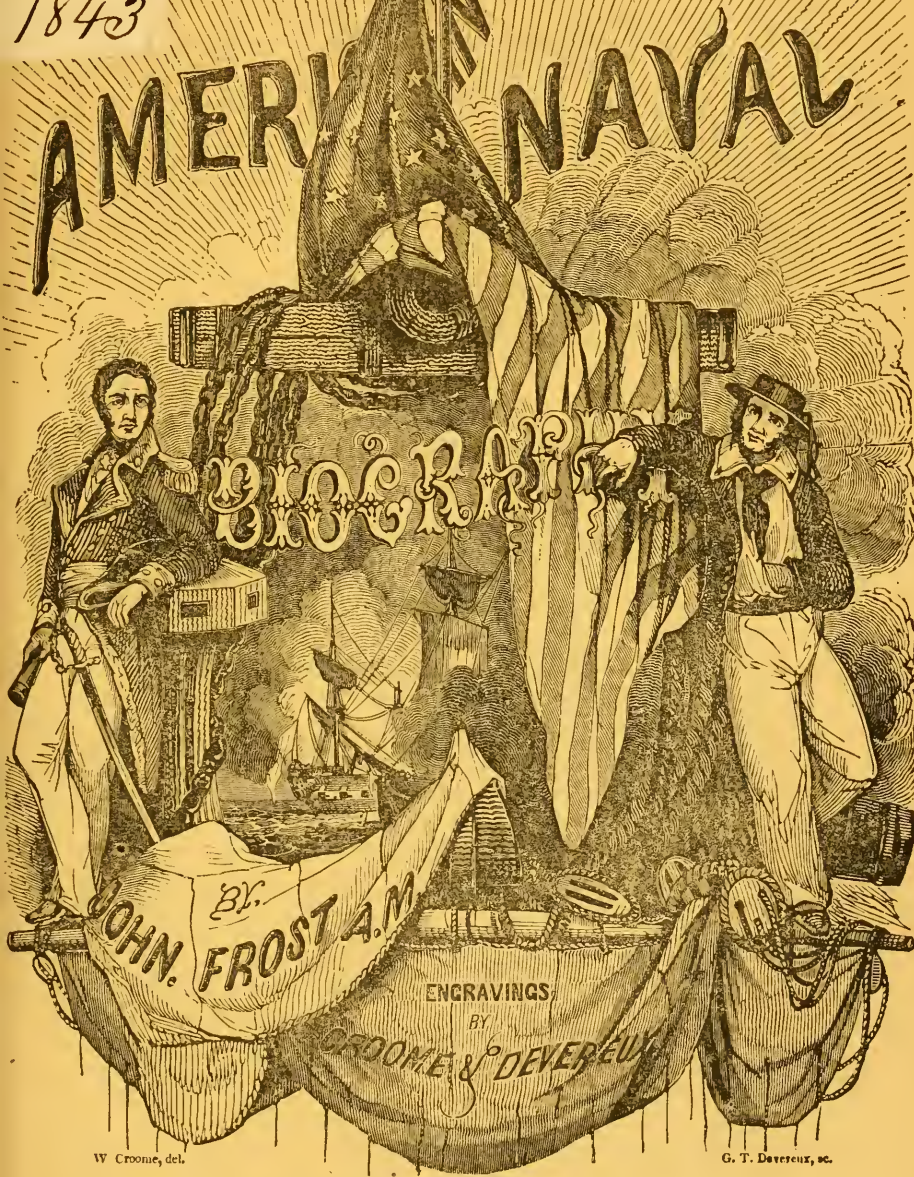
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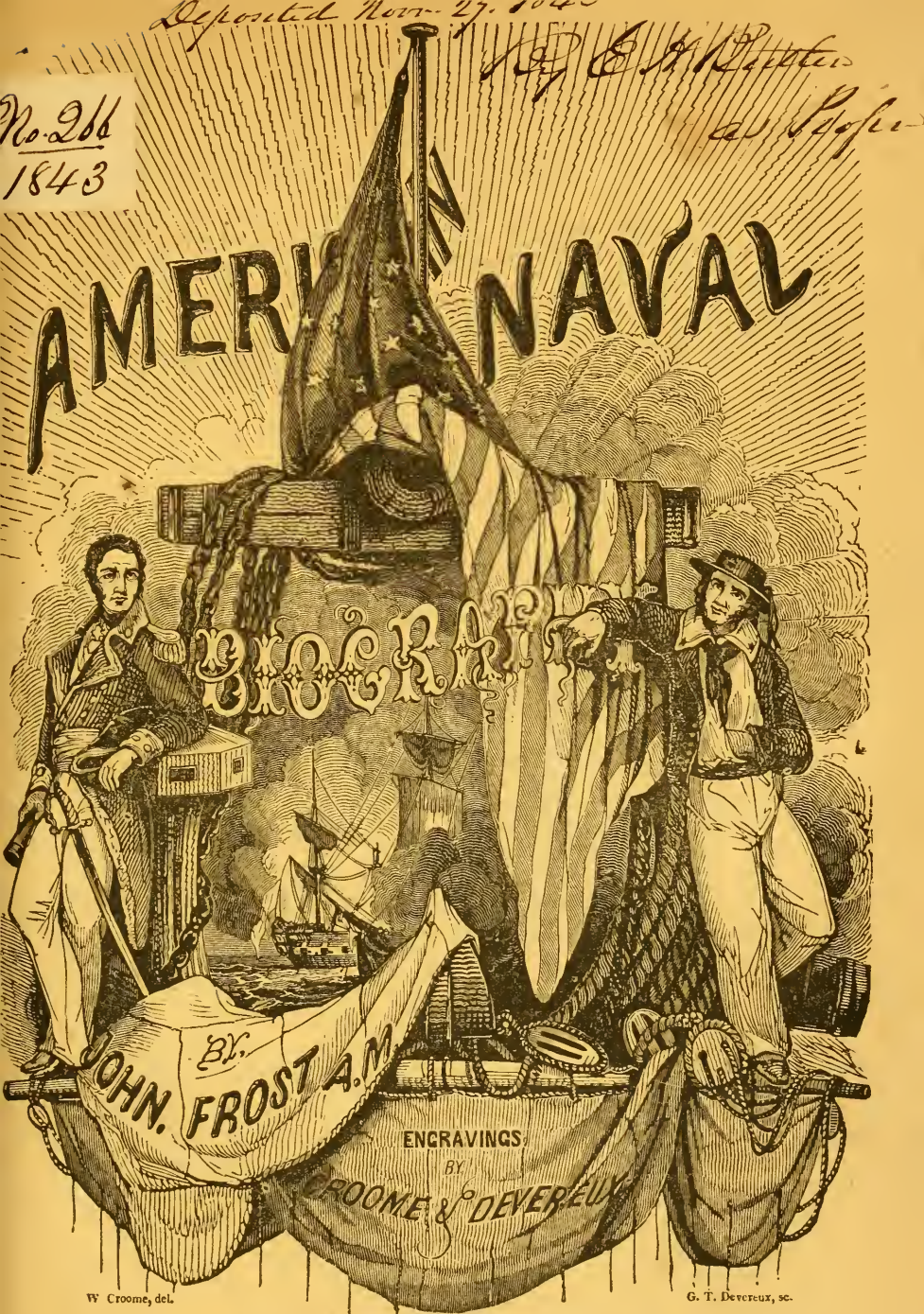


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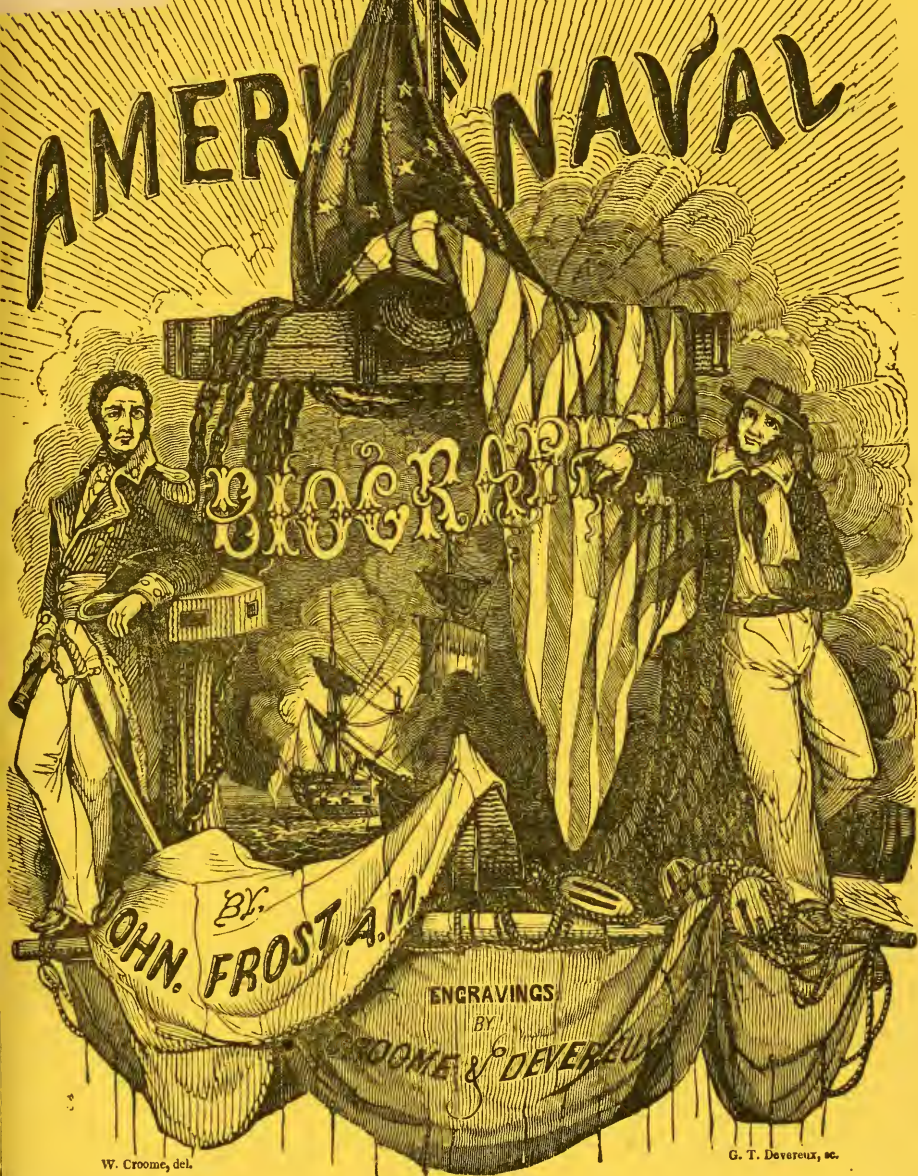
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November 27, 1843

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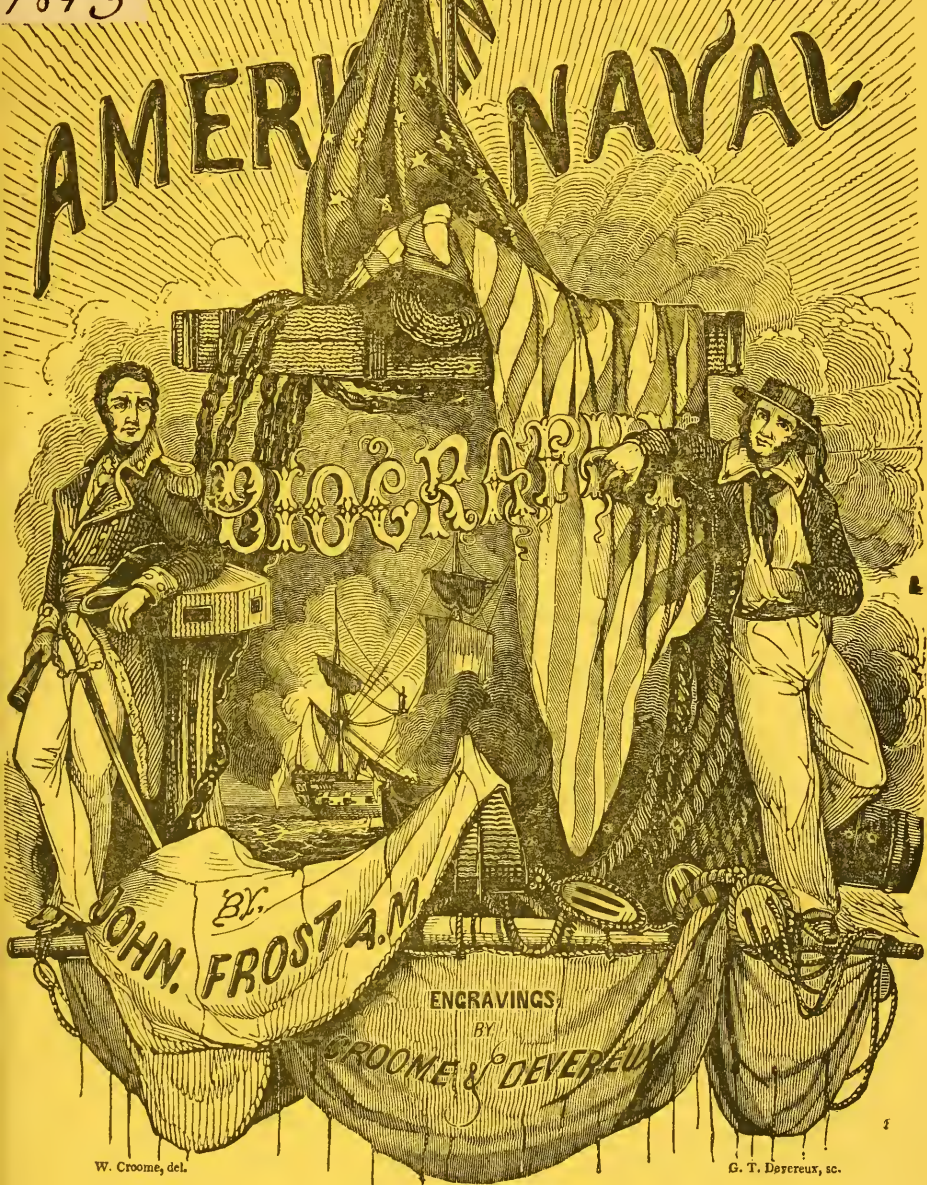
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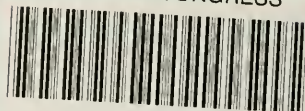








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